

By the Same Author

JUNGLE DOCTOR

JUNGLE DOCTOR ON SAFARI

JUNGLE DOCTOR OPERATES

JUNGLE DOCTOR ATTACKS WITCHCRAFT

JUNGLE DOCTOR MEETS A LION

JUNGLE DOCTOR TO THE RESCUE

JUNGLE DOCTOR'S CASE-BOOK

JUNGLE DOCTOR AND THE WHIRLWIND

EYES ON JUNGLE DOCTOR

JUNGLE DOCTOR LOOKS FOR TROUBLE

JUNGLE DOCTOR GOES WEST

DOCTOR OF TANGANYIKA

PAUL WHITE

JUNGLE DOCTOR'S ENEMIES

With Thirty-two Illustrations

by HARRY SWAIN and BOOTHROYD



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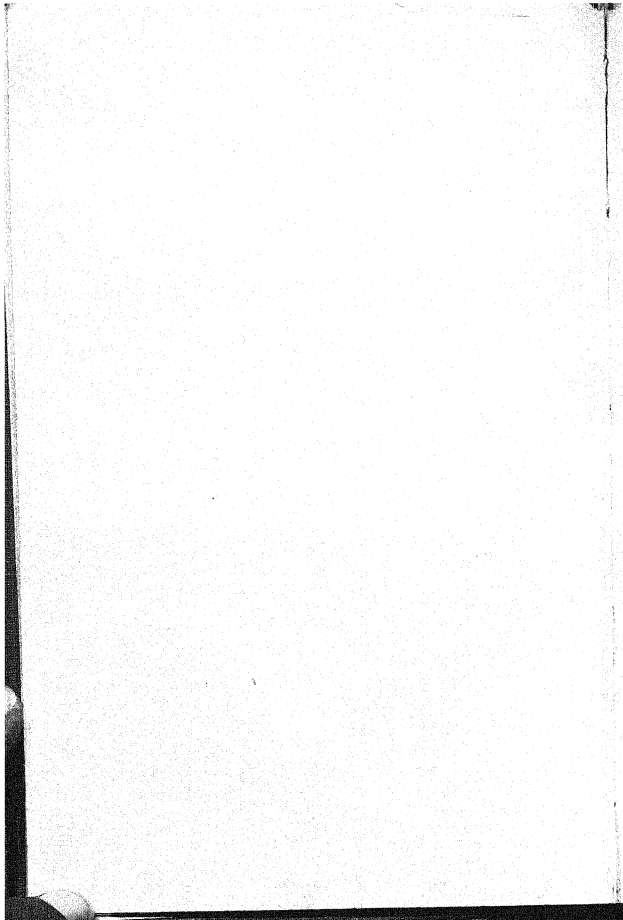


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CHAPTER I

A RUMOUR AND A BLIND BOY

THE African lad stumbled and nearly fell, clutching as he did so at the cornstalks growing on each side of the winding path. He steadied himself for a moment and then groped his way uncertainly forward. Closing the hospital's hyena-proof gate I came across to him.

"*Nhawule wayiko?*" (What's up, old chap?)

For a moment he stood silent and then in a voice thick from crying, he said, "Bwana, my companions will not let me help push the car, because I am Mubofu, the blind one, and . . ." His voice failed him.

He turned away and walked back the way he had come. There was something unspeakably pathetic about the droop of his shoulders and his hands held vaguely in front of him.

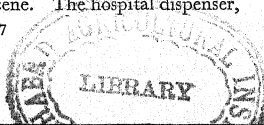
I had caught a glimpse of his face and it had borne the stamp of tragedy—two empty eye-sockets telling the story of the hopelessness of native medicine. As I came level with him the blind boy said, "Bwana, I *can* push, even though I live in *Ulitu*" (the land of darkness).

"But supposing you tripped over as the car gathers speed?" I asked.

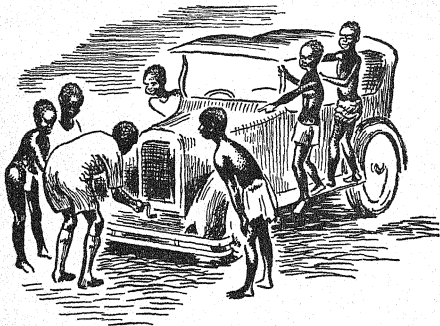
"*Kah*, Bwana, I am no stranger to falling. I have no fear of a bruise or two. Will you not allow me to help?"

The path along which we were walking swerved sharply to pass round the trunk of a huge baobab tree. I watched with amazement how the lad unerringly followed the centre of the track.

Into view came a lively scene. The hospital dispenser,



Samson, was cranking a twenty-year-old car with considerable vigour. His efforts were encouraged by a group



of small boys dressed in a minimum. They waved their knobbed sticks in the air and danced up and down and chanted.

"Na vilungo gwe—na vilungo" (Go to it with strength).

Seeing me, Samson straightened up and wiped his brow. *"Hongo, Bwana, the battery is sleeping."*

I grinned. "The row these *Wadodo* (little people) are making is enough to wake even it, surely."

"Kah, Bwana, our car is not called 'Sukuma'" (Swahili for push) "for nothing."

"Bwana, we'll push," said the small boys, rushing forward.

"Viswanu" (right), I laughed, "but you must wait for a moment till I'm ready."

Changing from Chigogo, the language of the Central Plains of Tanganyika, to English, I said, "Samson, I've a good mind to take that little blind chap with us to Dodoma. I think it would be a real red-letter day in

his life to go on safari with us. You can bring him back later on when I've caught the train."

The dispenser nodded, "We can be his eyes for him to-day and tell him all we see along the road and in the town."

Mubofu was crouching down in the shade of the mud-brick shed that was "Sukuma's" home. On the wall above him were three colourful lizards, busily hunting flies. As I walked over to him he got to his feet.

"Bwana, you'll let me help push?"

"Kah," I said, "how did you know it was I coming towards you?"

"Hongo," said the little lad, his whole face lighting up—his smile somehow accentuating the tragedy of those ghastly hollows where his eyes should have been. "Kah, Bwana, I heard your shoes in the sand and I know no African who walks like you do."

I whistled. "What ears you've got!"

"Bwana, my ears have to be my eyes as well these days"—he put his hand on my sleeve—"Bwana, Bwana, will you let me push?"

"No, Mubofu," I replied, "I will not allow you to push."

All the joy left his face. Before he could speak I said, "But I wondered if perhaps you would care to come on safari with Samson and myself to-day. We are going to Dodoma."

"Kah," said the small boy, "in the car, in 'Sukuma'?"

"Heya" (Yes), I said.

"Yoh, Bwana, it has been my strong wish for many days to travel in a car. Kah!"

He proceeded to do a little dance, which set the lizards clambering up the trunk of the baobab tree. I collected my luggage and said good-byes.

As we walked back to the car I said to Samson, "Who is this blind lad, and what is his story?"

"His people are dead, Bwana. He sleeps in the tribal house of his relations in a village which is of the *Washenzi* (the most heathen of the heathen). I have heard

it said that they feed him because they think he will die before long anyhow, and it is better not to upset the spirits of the ancestors unnecessarily."

Twenty yards or so away was the subject of our conversation, eagerly standing beside the car.

I placed him on the front seat between Samson and myself. Letting off the handbrake I called out, "*Haya wadodo sukuma*" (Come on, come children, push).

Slowly we moved forward under twenty-boy power. The old machine slowly gained speed as we rolled down the stony track from the hospital. I let in the clutch. "Sukuma" back-fired noisily; shrieking, the small black folk scampered away. Then the engine started and I was on the first lap of a holiday that was to take me to the far side of Lake Victoria Nyanza, the very centre of Africa.

I drove carefully down a crazily-cut track running through a dry river-bed.

"Bwana," said the blind boy. "It's on the hill beyond the fourth river that I live. Do I not know this part of the road very well indeed?"

"Truly," said Samson, "he travels this road as well as anybody, Bwana, his feet seem to know every rock and rut."

"It was here, Bwana, at Chibaya, that I was born. Bwana, it was here that I lost my eyes."

"Oh," I said, "how did it happen?"

The blind boy held up four fingers. "It was four years ago, Bwana, when *serenyenyi* came into our village."

I looked at Samson questioningly. He framed with his lips the word "measles." I nodded silently.

"*Hongo*," continued the lad, "those were days of sorrow, Bwana, first my nose and then my eyes ran, *ehh*, how I coughed. My *wandugu* (relations) would not let me sleep. They beat tins and shouted and shook me; 'you must not die,' they said. Then, Bwana, my eyes became very sore because of the glare and the flies, and they put me inside the house, but the smoke of the cooking fires made my eyes worse still."

He sat up suddenly and pointed with his chin towards a group of huts. "There, Bwana, is my house. There, Bwana, is where it all happened."

"*Kah*," said Samson, "how do you know we've come to your house?"

"*Kumbe*," explained the boy, "is my nose not awake? Shall I not know the smell of my own village?"

There was silence for a while and then he said, "Bwana, there was pain, fiery pain in my eyes, for did I not have *maclligala* (eye ulcers) but Bwana, there was no one to take me to the hospital then. There was no C.M.S. hospital, nor had you come from your own country."

Something was moving in the jungle beside the road. Suddenly Samson shouted, "Look, Bwana, *mpala* . . ." A buck the size of a Shetland pony sprang up from a thorn-bush thicket and bounded away in great leaps.

"What was it, Bwana?" asked Mubofu, his hand on my shoulder.

"A beautiful buck," I replied. "See, there behind it is another."

As the words went past my lips I tried to stop them slipping out, but the boy's face was aglow. "I can see it, Bwana, in my mind. *Yoh*, how they jump."

The road wound in and out through thorn country, and as I drove I thought about measles, and how world-wide epidemics often occurred every five years, and it would seem that another was due very shortly if the wretched disease came up to schedule.

"Samson," I said, as we crossed a dry river-bed, which in the wet season could be a muddy torrent, "we must be prepared for another measles epidemic and not let this sort of thing happen again, now we've got our hospital going."

"*Kah*, Bwana," said Samson, "they don't only go blind when measles come; hundreds and hundreds of children die. Behold, in our own country it is truly the disease of trouble and death and sorrow, especially for children."

I looked at the pitiful little face beside me, and thought of the torment that small boy must have suffered. He,

however, was not thinking of measles, and was tense with excitement. Each mile of that journey had its own particular interest to him. He amazed me as time and again he described what he had passed. His senses seemed unusually quick. He sat there as alert as a terrier as "Sukuma" spluttered and skidded along the Cape-to-Cairo Road.

We were climbing now, going up a steep hill on which cactus flourished. Immediately beneath us was a patch of dark-green mango trees growing round the sandy river-bed, amongst them the white buildings of the C.M.S. Boys' School. We turned off the road and drove through a peanut garden, past a carpentry workshop where African lads were busy making tables. I stopped the car under a great Kikuyu tree and lifted Mubofu to the ground, and taking an African shilling from my pocket, beckoned to Samson. As he ran round the car I examined the lion on the back of the coin; handing it to him, I said, "Samson, buy *posho* (food) for yourself and young Mubofu. In an hour we shall drive to the railway station."

"*Ndio*, Bwana—yes, sir," said Samson, unconsciously using Swahili, the language spoken in the towns.

I had heard from my friend, the Principal of this great African School, that a measles epidemic had actually started, but as yet it was away up in the north in the Sudan and Abyssinia. There was no news of it being in Tanganyika.

The station-master, a tall Indian, informed me that the train was ten hours late, and then, since he knew my profession, he told me of a severe epidemic in his home town, Karachi; to me it sounded suspiciously like measles.

Samson was pumping up "Sukuma's" tyres; as I came through the station gate he looked up inquiringly.

"The train is ten hours late," I told them.

Mubofu laughed: "*Hongo*, Bwana, that is very good, behold, you will have time to tell me many things about Dodoma and describe what you see with your eyes so that I may see it in my mind."

CHAPTER II

MUBOFU

"SAMSON, you go into the shop of Ahmed Rhemtulla, load up with rice, soap and the cement that we require for the new well. Take Mubofu with you and when I have finished my arrangements here at the station I will come over and collect him and show him some of the town."

The dispenser stood at attention and said, "*Ndio, Bwana.*" Then he climbed in behind the wheel and drove off. I watched "*Sukuma*" moving down the road with Mubofu's head sticking out, his ears attuned to every sound that the town could provide. I could guess that Samson was telling him all about the post office, and the great granite fort that had been built in the days when Tanganyika was German East Africa. It took me some quarter of an hour to fix up sundry and various arrangements with the station-master. I then crossed the railway line, walking on the steel sleepers, and made my way past the public well, which was thronged with water carriers who paid one cent (and there are one hundred cents in a shilling) for each kerosene tin full of water which they received.

Arriving at the Indian shop I found Mubofu sitting on a box in a corner while Samson helped load bag after bag of rice.

"*Kah, Bwana,*" said the small boy, as I came across to him and put my hand on his shoulder. "*Kah,* has not this place a rich smell?" He wrinkled up his nose expressively.

An old Indian woman was cutting up a huge lump of sticky brown sugar.

"*Ukusaka kujeza sukari?*" (Would you like to taste some sugar?) I asked.

He nodded his head vigorously, so I handed over a five-cent piece and received a great lump of sugar as big as my closed fist. To my disgust there was a huge cockroach embalmed in it.

"*Kah, Mubofu, heh, there's a dudu in it.*" The small boy was not perturbed.

"Bwana," said he, "would you mind pulling it out then?"

As we walked through the town he became stickier and stickier, and merely nodded his head instead of asking the usual string of questions. I tried to describe to him the tinsmith making some kerosene tins into all manner of things. Then I told him about the Indian shoemaker, whose toes were nearly as useful as his fingers. Coming towards us down the centre of the road, dressed in the gayest colours, with brilliant turbans, were a number of Somalilanders. Out of their way scuttled several mangy dogs and a group of athletic chickens; behind us a horn blared. I grabbed Mubofu and was just in time to swing him out of the path of a ramshackle lorry driven by an Arab. It was greatly overloaded with Africans and a varied cargo which included a depressed-looking goat. Mubofu was licking his fingers. The sugar had disappeared at an amazing rate.

"*Kah, Bwana,*" said he, "I know where we are now. Is not this near the market-place? Behold, I can smell the skins of cows. *Yah,* and there is the smell of butter."

"My friend," I said, "you know it is not the custom of Europeans to eat butter like that." I looked distastefully at a gourd full of bright, semi-fluid material, which my nose classified as a near relative to rather nimble varieties of cheese.



"*Heh*, Bwana," said the small boy, "it is very hot."

"Well," I said, "come and sit in the shade. Behold, in front of us now is the great *Kanisa*" (the Cathedral).

Mubofu sat on the top step, facing away from the door which opened widely behind him. He carefully wiped his hands on the very ancient rag which was his only clothing. For a time he sat listening, and wrinkling up his nose, trying to gain every impression that he could, then in a rather awed voice he said, "Bwana, tell me what this great *Kanisa* looks like."

We turned and looked inside. It was very quiet and within the building our voices echoed. "Behold," I said, "there is not a flat roof like the ordinary houses of the people, but there is a dome, shaped like the top of your head, and the walls are very high. Why, if six men stood one on top of each other's shoulders they could barely touch the roof."

"*Heeh*," said the small boy, "it must reach almost to the clouds, Bwana."

"In the middle of the building, Mubofu, there are many stools, enough for six hundred people, then beyond all this is the place where they sing and preach."

Mubofu nodded as each part was described. I looked through the wide-open door. "Over there, Mubofu," I gently moved his chin until it was in line with a thorn-bush hedge over the railway track, "over there, Mubofu, is a place where many soldiers are buried, those who fought to free Tanganyika from the Germans. A little bit to the north of that is the path that the Arabs used when they drove slaves to the coast to sell them."

The blind boy was very serious when he listened to this part of the story.

I was watching three lizards walking up the wall, fly stalking, when my small companion asked suddenly: "Bwana, can people see in Heaven?"

For a moment the question caught me unprepared.

"Can they, Bwana?"

"Why, yes, Mubofu, they can, for doesn't it say in God's Word, 'they shall see His face'?"

"Bwana, read it to me." He held out his hand and I lead him through the cathedral to the reading desk, where there was a New Testament in Chigogo. I turned over the pages.

"Bwana, can't you feel that God is here?"

I nodded, forgetting that he could not see me.

"Truly," I replied, "and God is always near those of His own family. They may talk to Him at any time, and He talks to them by the words of His book. These are God's Words about Heaven; they were written by a man called John who was one of Jesus' own friends when he went about healing the people who were blind and sick, before the days when wicked men crucified Him. Here is the page, these are the words, Mubofu, 'God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, the first things are passed away.' That's what it says about Heaven."

"Bwana," said he, "read it again please."

I did so. In a very small voice he said, "*Heeh*, Bwana, if only I could go to Heaven! But then I'm only little and Bwana, I'm blind and I'm useless. I can do so little."

"Mubofu," I said, "listen. It isn't what you do that matters a bit. It's what the Lord Jesus did. He died so that you might go to heaven, to do what you cannot do, no matter how hard you try. He paid the price for your freedom."

I sang softly the words:

"There was no other good enough
To pay the price of Sin;
He only could unlock the gate
Of heaven and let us in."

Mubofu nodded. "I see, Bwana, He paid the *wulipicizo*" (the freedom price).

"Yes, it's exactly that, Mubofu. Why, in this very place years ago there were slaves, but no one to buy their freedom. For us there is hope, because Jesus—God's only son—died to buy us back from a different sort of slavery."

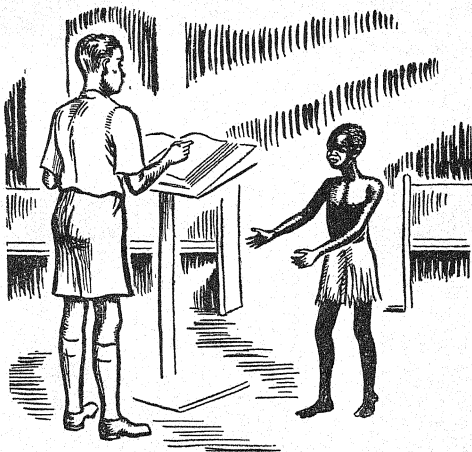
Again Mubofu nodded. "Bwana, are you sure it means me, too?"

"It must, because Jesus said 'Him that cometh to me I will in no wise—under no circumstances—cast out.'"

"But, Bwana, what must I do? What can I say to Him since I greatly want to be one of His tribe?"

"All you have to do if you want to start on the road to Heaven is to ask the Lord Jesus to be your Bwana, your Lord. Then He comes into your life and with Him comes everlasting life and out goes sin and its fruits; there is no place for them in the house of your life when the Son of God is there. Is He not offering you this gift of life for ever, and light (not for your eyes now), but for your soul?"

The little African lad stretched out both his hands in



the way they do in the tribe when they receive a welcome guest. He said, "*Mulungu umulungulungu mbochere*" (Almighty God, please receive me).

The sun was well down towards the horizon, and as the light streamed in through a narrow window, from where I stood behind the small boy I could see his face lighted up. I couldn't see the horror of his empty eyes, but I could see all the beauty of his smile. It seemed to me that the small African boy was very right when he said that God was very close there. For a while we stood in silence, and then he said, "Bwana, will you talk to God?"

So together in the African language we spoke to the Almighty, and then very quietly we turned and walked down the passage between the three-legged stools towards the great door at the back of the Cathedral. I was just about to put my foot on the top step when I looked down. My foot stopped in mid-air. I grasped Mubofu by the shoulder. "Keep absolutely still," I ordered, "stay exactly where you are, don't move your head." Without a word the small boy obeyed. I reached for one of the three-legged stools; picked it up, and threw it with every bit of force that I could muster. Crash! It hit the steps. I led the small boy back into the Cathedral and looked through the doorway. There, wriggling, but with its back broken was the body of a cobra.

"What was it, Bwana?" asked Mubofu.

"*Nzoka* (a snake)," I replied. "If you had gone one step farther, Mubofu, perhaps you would now be in Heaven."

"*Kah*," said the small boy, "Bwana, perhaps the Lord Jesus has some work for me to do, blind as I am."



CHAPTER III

TELEGRAMS AND TRAGEDIES

THE thousand-ton steamer rolled most uncomfortably, and everybody on board seemed more than thankful when the blue line of the coast of Tanganyika showed up. It seemed very hard to realize that we were in the heart of Africa and yet were completely surrounded by water. It was the last stage of my journey round Lake Victoria Nyanza.

One of the ship's officers came up to me.

"It looks to me, Doctor, as though we are going to be three hours late. That will mean that you will miss the train and there won't be another one for days, so you'll get a few days additional holiday and a pretty good chance of having a look at the old slave town of Mwanza. Be sure you go round to the bay where Alexander MacKay built the dhow that he used to travel in across to Uganda."

Very soon we had come within view of the crowded wharf, the fringe of palm trees around the shore, and the white buildings of the town in the background. I was getting my luggage together when an African came bounding up the gangway and handed me a telegram. Now telegrams always make me feel uncomfortable. Tearing it open I read:

Measles epidemic spreading—thirty deaths in nearby villages. Your early return imperative.

Hastily hiring three *wapagazi* (African porters) I proceeded to the railway station at a speed which they regarded as indecent. I arrived to find the whole

station ominously quiet. Here I was, 350 miles away from the place where I was urgently needed. The passenger train had gone two hours before, and there would be no other for three days. I looked eastward. Over there on the Central Plains an epidemic was raging; children were dying, while I was immobilized here. It was a grim situation. There was only one thing for it, so I set to work to explore every possible means of travelling that 350 miles.

I went to the station-master, a tall, turbaned Indian with a black beard. He seemed thoroughly interested in the view of blue water and green islands which were framed under the picturesque limbs of a great flame tree.

"Station-master," I said, "is it not possible to get some other form of transport to Dodoma?"

With a typical Indian gesture he waved his hands hopelessly.

"There's no passenger train; lorry transport is impossible."

"What about goods trains?" I asked, "could I not ride in the brake-van with the conductor?"

He shook his head doubtfully. "I will inquire, Doctor, regarding goods trains."

I stood admiring the splendid two-story building which marked the terminus of the line from the Indian Ocean coast 700 miles away. The station-master strode out of his office and bowing said, "I must inform you, Doctor, that there is a goods train, but most uncomfortable for travel, with very bad springs and slow speed. However, if you care to suffer these inconveniences, transport can be arranged."

And so it was that that evening, armed with a hurricane lantern, a native basket containing mangoes, and a pound of biscuits, I made myself as comfortable as I could inside the brake-van of the goods train.

With a jolt the train moved ponderously on its way along the metre-gauge track, the steel sleepers, so necessary to cheat the white ants of their dinner, rattling noisily

beneath us. I looked out into the darkness and there, winding away hundreds of yards behind us, was a glowing trail of embers from the engine which was fuelled with wood. It was a hopeless business trying to read. The lantern swayed violently. I drowsed off in my chair only to wake with a bump when the canvas seat of the camp stool, which apparently was not the newest, split suddenly under my weight. I staggered unsteadily to my feet and at that moment with a screaming of brakes the train pulled up at a wayside station. There was a waving of lanterns and a babble of voices.

I walked along beside the train in the coolness of the night, stretching my legs and rejoicing in the quietness. Farther down the train they were unloading crates by the light of hurricane lanterns. Then I heard a voice behind me.

"Excuse me, Bwana Doctor."

I looked around and there was a tall African *Askari* and the train conductor.

"Bwana," said the policeman in Swahili, "would you please go to the station house? There's a stray boy lying on the floor and he is not breathing very much."

I suspected that this was a gentle way of informing me that the person, whoever he was, was dead. I went along to see him and found with him an old friend of mine, one Lubeni, who came from a part of the country hundreds of miles away.

"Bwana," said he, using the language which I was most used to, "he lives miles from here. First he had measles and then while he was still weak he was bitten by a hyena. He was treated by the witch-doctor for many days, and then was sent by his chief to travel to one of our C.M.S. hospitals, but he collapsed by the way and I found him abandoned in the bush. He was exhausted and *yah*, how his arm did smell, so I carried him on my back, and brought him here hoping to put him on the train, but behold he has collapsed, and then they said you were on the train."

I bent over the lad and felt his very feeble pulse; he

was barely alive. The arm was in a dreadful condition. We lifted him on to a native mat and, with the help of the policeman and some others, carried him along to the guard's van. We had a little discussion, that was not a bit friendly, with the conductor. He wasn't going to have any other passengers, especially sick ones, in his van! However, that was overcome, and when the train continued on its rattling way down the line, not only was our patient on board, but Lubeni as well.

We had all too little in the way of supplies. Lubeni supplied a first-aid kit and a gourd full of milk. The trouble was that our patient was quite unconscious and couldn't swallow, so we fed him with a rubber tube, which, incidentally, came from my stethoscope. We poured the nourishment down a funnel that the conductor used for his kerosene stove. Lubeni was most gentle in his care of the lad.

"Bwana," said he, "he can swallow now."

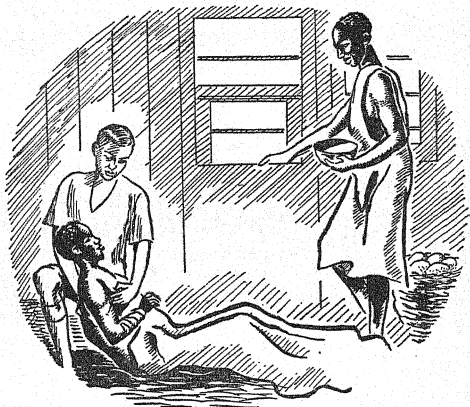
A cup was filled with milk and glucose. The African teacher held it to the lad's lips. Sip by sip he drank notwithstanding the swaying and bumping of the train. If the noise had been trying before, it seemed unbearable now. I longed for the quiet and even the crudest of hospital facilities. Outside, the blackness of the night seemed to speak of the hopelessness of the suffering African. Thinking of the days and nights he had spent in this journey, the agony and despair of it, I loaded the syringe with a drug that would soothe his pain, and injected it. Ten minutes later a sigh came from his lips.

"Bwana," he said, "the pain has gone."

A few moments after he said in a very feeble voice a few words that I could not grasp, but Lubeni explained.

"He says it is not enough, he is still thirsty."

I was greatly encouraged by this improvement and supplied a further cupful. With the coming of the dawn there seemed to be real progress. The lad sat up and thanked me for what I had done, but I could see he was completely exhausted. When the train pulled up at



another station, I got a dish of hot water from the engine and dressed his arm. It was not an attractive job. We managed also to get a couple of native mats and a cotton blanket for which we paid three shillings.

Right throughout the day the train rattled on, stopping it seemed for hours at each station. It was unbearably hot. The steel walls of the van made it like an inferno. We brewed tea and gave the lad some. We were all so tired that it was almost impossible to keep awake and yet it was impossible to sleep because of the heat and the flies. The conductor was becoming more and more hostile and I feared trouble from him. Sunset came, soon followed by darkness. I felt the lad's pulse and raised my eyebrows. Lubeni came over to me. I cupped my hands and spoke as loudly as I dared into his ear.

"It's touch and go, we might just manage to save him. Will you watch him and call me if there is any change?"

The African nodded.

I sat on the floor and leant against the swaying wall of the compartment and fell into a troubled sleep. My dreams contained something of the horror of witch-doctors' activity. I woke with a start, trembling all over. Lubeni had his hand on my shoulder.

"Bwana," said he, "I think he's resting at last."

Together we made him as comfortable as we could.

"Lubeni," I whispered, "does he know about God, and the Way of Life?"

The African shook his head.

"I don't think he understands, Bwana, he's too sick to listen even; also he comes from a country where they worship their ancestors and know little of Jesus and of the Way of Life. Was it not for this reason that I left my home and my relations in the Uluguru Mountains and came over here into the west that I might tell these people of the One who has made my life worth living?"

There was silence between us and the train rattled to a standstill. From the region of the engine came a flop, flop, flop—of logs being loaded into the tender. Way out beyond the thorn-bush came the noise of the crickets and the rhythmical beat of a drum in a native village, then the staccato bark of a jackal.

By the light of a lantern I saw that we had reached a station some seventy miles from where we could get off to go to the Hospital, but just as the train jolted into motion I felt the lad's pulse flicker and stop. We had been too late. I looked across at Lubeni.

"It is too late. If only we could have got there in time."

As the train pulled in at the next station we left all that remained of that tragedy of African life wrapped in a cheap native blanket, but I knew that ahead of me lay weeks of hectic activity which could mean the saving of scores of other African lives by the simplest means at the smallest cost.

CHAPTER IV

A FORETASTE

THE Tanganyika Express rumbled on through the night. The harshness of the thorn-bush jungle and the starkly rising granite outcrops were softened by the starlight. The only light was the broad way opened up by the searchlight on the front of the engine. I stood on the platform of the carriage looking out. Slinking out of the brilliance into a tangle of thorn-bush was a hyena that was picking at the bones of a gazelle, probably a lion's kill. Then the headlights opened up a clear patch of the jungle. Three giraffes stood in position. They might easily have been the African equivalent of the three bears story. There was a very big one, a middle-sized one and a baby giraffe. As suddenly as they appeared they were gone, and the train plodded on towards Dodoma, capital of the Central Provinces.

I saw some lights appearing a mile or two away. It was the town. Again the searchlight, with its white finger, played on a clump of mango trees growing beside a dry river-bed. For a moment I had a glimpse of the dome of the cathedral and I thought of my adventure there with Mubofu. The train had slowed down now almost to a crawl and pulled up at Dodoma. On the floodlit station were my smiling assistants, Daudi and Samson.

"*Mbukwenyi*" (Good day), I greeted them, shaking hands African fashion.

"*Kah! Bwana, wajina,*" they replied in a breath. "You have grown fat, sir."

This is the polite thing to say after a person has had a holiday!

As we moved over to the car I heard of the news of the hospital.

"*Yah, Bwana,*" said Daudi. "It is a bad business, very bad indeed. The children are dying all over the country. There is so little we can do about it. Truly we need your help."

"We'll get a plan of campaign going at once," I replied.

Samson dexterously cranked the car, which for once stuttered into life and sounded like an aeroplane.

"What's happened?" I asked, cupping my hands and shouting.

"The exhaust pipe fell off, Bwana," yelled Samson in reply. "We hope to find it on the way back."

I grinned as we drove away from the town and the familiar twists and turns of the road opened up before us. My African helpers chatted. They told me how the peanut crop was growing, about the beams in the roof of the laboratory that had been eaten by white ants, and of the hospital nurse who had run away to get married.

It was three o'clock in the morning and their exuberance died down as the old car roared its way through the thorn-bush. Even the appearance of eyes of all sorts of members of the jungle in the night was not sufficiently interesting to keep them awake. Their heads started nodding. We were climbing a hill. Framed under the limbs of a great baobab tree that seemed to reach out towards us like a skeleton's arms was a typical African house. It looked like a page cut from Stanley's book, *How I Found Livingstone*. As I came level with this place I saw a figure that detached itself from the shadows and ran waving towards the road. I pulled up.

"Bwana," came the voice, "can you come in and see my son? He has *ihoma*" (the stabbing disease). This is the African's picturesque way of describing the pain of pleurisy.

I went to look at the lad after lighting a hurricane lantern. Sleepily, Daudi came with me.



"Where is this, Daudi?"

"It's a village called Manhumbulu, Bwana."

I recognized the name often mentioned by Stanley when he had fought with chiefs and they had demanded rolls of cloth before he was allowed to travel through.

Daudi's voice came to me from the darkness. "This man is the chief, Bwana, he is a man of much influence."

We had come to the front of the house. Our guide went in front.

"*Hodi*?" (May I come in?), I called outside the native house.

"*Karibu* (Come in), Bwana," came a chorus of voices from the darkness.

My lantern showed a red-mud floor with walls and ceiling of the same material. Lying on a cow-hide on the floor covered by a cotton blanket was a lad. His eyes were very inflamed. His nostrils moved and he grunted painfully at each breath. Daudi assisted him

to sit up. I tapped the back of his chest with my finger in the way that we doctors have. There was that dull, ominous sound so characteristic of pneumonia. I tapped the other side—double pneumonia. I listened with the stethoscope: there was not a shadow of doubt about the diagnosis, nor yet of the treatment that he had received. Over the front of his chest were a series of deep cuts, shaped something like Prince of Wales's feathers. Into each of these had been rubbed some concoction that made them angry and swollen. Nor was there any doubt that he was suffering from pneumonia following our old enemy, measles.

I nodded to the Chief. "It's *ihoma* all right and he's very bad. We'll carry him to the car and take him to hospital. With the guidance of God we will succeed in making him better."

Samson and Daudi linked hands and made a first-aid portable chair for the patient. Gently he was carried to the car, covered with what blankets we could muster and propped up with Daudi beside him. Taking water from the radiator I dissolved a morphia tablet and injected it. I decided to wait ten minutes for it to act before I continued along the road.

"*Muwaha*" (Great One), I said to the Chief. "Is there *serenye* in your country?"

"*Kah!* Bwana, many are ill and many have died."

"May we send help and medicine from the hospital?"

"*Heh!* I will send my men to help carry it and to do your bidding."

My patient was dozing when I slipped the car into gear and said good-bye. Ahead of us was a narrow riverbed concreted by the P.W.D., but so made that unless you knew that road like the palm of your hand you would be into it before you knew it and up and out of it with a neat little bruise on the top of your head. I dropped into low gear and nosed gently through it. Even then there was a jolt and the road suddenly disappeared and we seemed blanketed in darkness.

"*Huh,*" grunted Samson, "a fuse."



The darkness was oppressive. It seemed to close in upon us; the night was silent and still, and I could hear the grunting of the sick man behind me. Samson had lifted the front seat and was groping round in the tool-box.

"Yah," said he. "Yoh!!"

"What's the trouble?" I asked.

"Heh, I dropped the jack on my finger."

I could hear Daudi chuckling in the darkness.

"I think it was in the tool-box," said he, "that I saw a scorpion."

"Yah," said Samson, "what a pity I did not find it before I found this fuse."

As my eyes became more used to the darkness I could see a vague silhouette as he fumbled underneath the dashboard. Suddenly the lights were on again to reveal a hyena fifteen yards ahead of us. It slunk off out of the glare of the light. We got back into the front seat.

"Yah," said Daudi, "is it not good to have the light again?"

Starting the car again I said, "If there's one thing I have learned on my holiday it is the need of light. Light comes from lamps, and after all, God's book, the

Bible, is called a lamp. Does it not say, 'Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path?'"

We swung round a corner and far ahead of us in the middle of the road was a leopard with two cubs. They disappeared hastily into the thorn-bush. Hardly were they out of sight when, crossing a dry river-bed and skidding dizzily in the sand, the headlights showed up a black-maned lion walking sedately across the road.

"*Yah*," said Daudi, "everybody is walking to-night."

Samson switched on the dashboard light and he pulled off his shoes; with one eye on the road and the other on him I watched proceedings. Into his hand he shook an ugly-looking insect, crushing it between his finger and thumb.

"*Yah*," he said, "*dudus*." Anything that crawls or creeps is a *dudu* in Tanganyika Territory.

"You see what I mean," I said, "without the light Samson would not have caught his *dudu*; without the light we would have run into hyena and leopard and lion; but with the light, not only do we see where we are going, but we are able to dazzle and overcome these creatures. Did not Jesus rightly say, 'I am the Light of the World,' and are we not on the right side when we have the Light with us and use His Book, not just now and then, but as our Lamp through life?"

"Truly, Bwana," said Daudi, and then his voice came again, "Look over there"; the pitch of his voice was high, and twinkling on a hill was a pin-point of light. We were in sight of home.

We drove into a grove of baobab trees and the light disappeared. Hidden in the green of the wet weather foliage the track turned sharply and wound through a village of mud huts. In front of one of these, was a group of men dancing in line before a fire. The great drums were beating with a queer hectic rhythm. A monotonous dirge was kept up by a group of men in the shadows, who punctuated their song with the noise of rattles. Daudi leaned over towards me.

"*Kah*, Bwana," said he in a hushed voice, "*Kah*, this

is a place of evil. Truly is it called *Chibaya* (the place of badness). Is not the Chief, Chikoti, the most evil man in the place? Behold, he is full of pride. Does he not ride a white donkey and wear a waistcoat embroidered with silver? He thinks nothing of stealing, and even of murder."

"And is it not in this village that Mubofu lives?"

"Yes, Bwana, he lives over there." He pointed with his chin towards a dilapidated hut at the end of the village. "I have fears that harm will come to that boy."

The road wound through a tangle of thorn-bush.

"*Kah*," said Samson. "Bwana, this is an evil place, a place very easy to lose yourself in, in the dark. Behold, from here you cannot see the light of the hospital on the hill."

We were all thankful somehow when once again the twinkling light came into view. We drove through the fields of millet and of maize, and climbed the long hill to the hospital.

Before long our patient was put to bed, none the worse for his journey, and I scrambled under my mosquito net to get a couple of hours sleep before starting to plan a counter-attack against that grim threat to child life in Tanganyika—a measles epidemic.

CHAPTER V

PLANS AND DEMONSTRATIONS

I WAS standing in the maternity ward of the hospital, looking out through the windows that gave a wide view of the plains stretching north for hundreds of miles.

"Sister," I said. She looked up from where she was busily bathing a newly-born African baby. "What are your ideas about dealing with this measles epidemic?"



"There seems to be only one thing for it," she replied as she reached across for a safety-pin, "the whole thing is a matter of life or death for hundreds of children. You do what you can in the villages and in organizing an attack on the epidemic, and I'll do what I can in carrying on the maternity side of the hospital."

And so it was arranged. I went back to my office and drew up the plans for attack. They were almost finished when I heard Daudi's voice calling "*Hodi*" at the door.

I opened it for him. He sat down on a three-legged stool. I picked up a piece of paper. "This is the rough diagram, Daudi. First, we must have hospital space for the children. Lots of it."

"And Bwana, make plenty of space for mothers and grandmothers and relations. Do not forget that many of these people have heard awful stories of what you do to patients in hospital. How you open them up with your knife while they're sleeping and take out bits of their bodies to turn into medicine, and you sew them up in a way that cannot be seen. Truly, Bwana, their mothers will not agree to their children staying in hospital unless they can watch everything that is going on."

I groaned. "Must we do that, Daudi? Can't we keep them out somehow?"

"Bwana, if you try to do that they will refuse to come in, and the children will die."

"But, Daudi, if we let them in, they will feed the children with the wrong food. They will take them out of bed when they've got high temperatures, and perhaps they will put the children on the floor and sleep in the beds themselves. We have seen that happen before now."

"Bwana," said Daudi, "our eyes must be very active, to see that they do not do these things. But, behold, it is better to have some trouble than that many children should die."

"All right," I said, "but I can see that there is trouble ahead of us."

"Heeh," said Daudi, "we will have mother Sechelela; she has a very strong tongue and great ability to deal with women. Also she has a very kind heart and tells them the Words of God in the right way."

"Right," I said, "we have that settled. Now, while we are still planning the hospital doings, we must give the staff special training as to what measles is, how people spread it, and how to deal with it properly. Not forgetting the various troubles that measles leaves behind it."

"Truly, Bwana, we must tell them what to say to the people in the villages, that they may explain how the medicines work."

"Very well, Daudi, I'll leave that bit to you and I'll set to work drawing up some lectures for the staff on what measles is, lessons that I don't think they'll easily

forget. Tell them all to be within sound of the drum at *saa nane* (two o'clock)."

Daudi nodded.

"Then, after that tutorial, you and I and some of the other dispensers must get to work and make medicine by the gallon—get all our other equipment ready so that to-morrow morning we may set out to start the battle against measles in the villages."

"Bwana," said Daudi, "it would be better for us to go to-night."

"But, why at night, Daudi? Why can't we go to the village in the daytime?"

"No good, Bwana. Go in the daytime and you will find the people away scaring the birds from their crops. There will be a few women around the place, but they will not allow you to see the sick children. They will push them inside the houses and tell you that all is well. But go in the night and . . ."

"But, Daudi, I don't want to go at night. I don't like walking through this jungle with a hurricane lantern in one hand and a stick in the other. I dislike hyenas intensely; besides, I am tired."

"Bwana," said Daudi, "you must go. You don't know what measles does, but you will see to-night and also if the children are sick with pneumonia they will not object to their being brought in at night because they feel that there is less chance of their being bewitched if they are carried in the darkness."

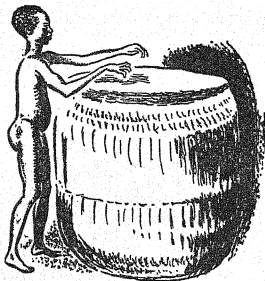
"All right then, we'll go to-night, but let us take Mika the teacher with us. He is a man of wisdom. Now don't forget, everybody in the training room when the great drum is heard."

* * * * *

"*Mihanya* (Good afternoon), Bwana," said a small boy sitting in the shade of a grass-roofed beehive-shaped hut that was our drum house.

"*Misaa*," I replied. "Do you know how to beat drums?"

"*Yah*," said he, "do I know how to beat drums!



Bwana, for many days I have hoped to beat that big drum."

"Now is your chance," I said. "Beat it."

I followed him into that little beehive-like house, which was our belfry and broadcasting station in one.

"Beat it," I instructed, "so that the hospital people will come."

He nodded and then his bare hands proceeded to produce a deep throbbing note from a drum bigger than himself. I knew from experience that that drum could be heard three miles away. The sun was intensely hot and everyone had been taking it easy during the midday break. Daudi, for coolness' sake, had been lying on the concrete floor of the out-patients veranda. He sat up. Samson emerged, yawning, from the dispensary, while Kefa appeared from the shady side of the great baobab tree. We moved together into the lecture room and soon the dozen folk whom I had called were sitting round, ready for instructions. Still the drum went on. I looked at Daudi—he nodded and went out of the door. Within a minute the drum was silent and Daudi came back breathless.

"Yah, Bwana, if I had not told him to stop he would have beaten that drum for perhaps an hour."

There were broad smiles on all sides.

The boys sat on a form on one side of the room and behind them the African nurses. Hilda, Daudi's wife, had her baby on her back. The junior nurses had recently learned to knit and were making sundry and various garments on needles which they had made

themselves. One of them, more expert than the others, was carefully catching a slipped stitch with a discarded injection needle. I started my oration.

In front of me was an African gourd containing tobacco snuff and a large dry biscuit.

"Kefa," I said, "I want you to eat this biscuit."

"Yah," said he. "Is there something wrong with it, Bwana?"

"No, it's a good biscuit, but I have chosen you to eat it because you sneeze so well."

A chuckle went round the class. The slightest smell of tobacco snuff started Kefa on a series of violent sneezes. True to form he crammed the biscuit into his mouth and chewed it up.

"Do you like the flavour?" I asked.

He mumbled something quite impossible to hear, his mouth was too full. I pulled the stopper from the snuff bottle, poured a little on my finger-nail and flipped it in front of Kefa's face. An agonized look came into his face, his cheeks bulged, his eyes flickered for a moment, his head moved back once or twice, he pressed violently on his upper lip, but nothing could stop that sneeze. Involuntarily the staff ducked. The room was showered with fine particles of dry biscuit.

"Bwana," said Kefa, "I'm sorry I——"

He sneezed again.

"I can't help——" again he sneezed. "It's your fault, it's the——" Again an explosion interrupted his sentence.

"Thank you, Kefa," I replied, "you have done all I wanted you to."

And turning to the staff I said, "You have seen the demonstration."

"Yah," said Daudi, "why did you do it, Bwana? It's a disgusting thing to sneeze food all over a room."

Daudi was quite upset. Samson was wiping his clean apron most disdainfully with a handkerchief.

"I wanted to show you," I replied, "the danger of a sneeze. You are upset, and rightly so, when particles of food are sprayed all over you."

"*Yah*," said Daudi.

"But remember that every time anyone sneezes they spray thousands and thousands of germs all over everybody within five yards of them."

"*Kah*," said Kefa. "I did not know that."

"No," I replied, "but you will never forget now, and a cough is just as dangerous unless you cover up your mouth."

"*Heeh*," said Kefa, "if I had covered my mouth, crumbs would have come from my ears."

"*Yah*," laughed Samson, "he looked funny, Bwana, with his mouth too full of biscuits, his eyes sticking out and a sneeze arriving which he could not stop."

Good humour was restored and everyone laughed.

"Listen, my friends," I said, "it is not to amuse you and play jokes on Kefa that I have come to you, but to tell you the reason why people spread measles. Now measles is not a germ, it is much smaller even than that; it is a virus, no microscope will show it. One child has this in his throat, his nose streams, he sneezes and coughs and behold other children catch the trouble. Therefore, let us teach people to put sick children in a separate part of the house, so that measles may not spread through the whole of the family like fire through a dry corn-field."

I went over to a box in the corner of the room and produced a bottle of yellow medicine, a small bottle of black eye-drops and a vinegar bottle labelled with a death's head and poison written underneath it in three languages.

"These," I said, "are our main medicines of attack against measles. The yellow mixture is for coughs, to soothe them, and to bring down the temperature. The eye-drops, of course, are to be put into the children's eyes; they will take away the redness and save many a child's eyesight, and the medicine in the long bottle is special. It is two things, a liniment to rub on chests, and in it is stuff called menthol, that cools the skin and at the same time the smell of it finds its way up the child's nose and helps there."

They nodded. "Yes, Bwana, we understand."

"There will be four teams, each of three people. Daudi will lead one, he will have a thermometer."

I turned to my lieutenant and said in English, "and if you break that thermometer, young man, we will be in trouble. We have only got seven left in the hospital."

"*Yah*," said Daudi, "I will care for it greatly, Bwana."

Going back into the language I continued: "The leader will write all the words of your works in a book, including the pulse and the respiration rates."

One of the junior girls rolled her eyes. "*Yah*," she said, "what's that?"

"Feel your wrist," I ordered, "on the thumb side, not too hard, and what do you feel?"

"*Hah*," she said, "there's something that moves up and down."

"That," I said, "is your pulse."

I turned suddenly to another girl: "The respiration rate is the number of times you breathe each minute. How many times do you breathe?"

"Sixty, Bwana," she replied, "*yah*."

"*Yah*," said Daudi, "that's the rate of a dog who has run very far without a drink."

"Let everyone count their breathing," I ordered, glancing at my watch.

There was profound nodding of heads and when I said "stop," there were various results from fourteen to twenty.

"Now you leaders," I ordered, "if anyone breathes more than thirty times a minute put a red cross after their name in your book. Every single person who is sick with measles must have their name written down. Write also the date, how much medicine you give, whether you put eye-drops into their eyes and if you rub their chest. Put down their pulse, their temperature, their respiration."

Daudi rolled his eyes, "*Yah*, Bwana, it's work."

"Work to save lives," I replied. "As well as the leader there is the junior nurse who is the medicine mixer. She

will carry a five-pint bottle of medicine on her head. The third member of the team is the eye and chest extra. First he cleans the eyes and then puts drops in. Afterwards he rubs chests and——" I turned questioningly to the staff.

They replied in unison, "Washes his hands, Bwana." I nodded.

"And Daudi, all leaders must see the children are kept inside in a clean part of the house away from the other children, that they have plenty of water to drink and that none of the relatives beat drums, shout, or do anything else to keep them awake."

Daudi nodded.

"Bwana, we will not only do that, but we will tell them the words of health and they will see what we can do to save life, to save eyes and to bring joy to sad hearts."

"One thing more," I added, "before you go, remember we do not just make people better who are sick, but we bring them the good news of the way out of a worse disease than measles, a disease that kills every time, not bodies but souls. Let us take every chance to tell people of Jesus."

"Bwana," said Daudi, "I read it this morning, 'Ye have not chosen Me (said Jesus), but I have chosen you, and ordained you that ye should bring forth much fruit.' Are we not like trees, Bwana?"

"You are, Daudi. But what profit is there in a mango tree if there are only leaves on it?"

"*Yah*," said Daudi, "but you can't eat leaves."

"Daudi, what's the value of a banana palm?"

He chuckled. "You can use the bark for wrapping parcels, Bwana, and the leaves as a substitute umbrella, but *yah*, it's the fruit that brings joy to your stomach."

"Remember," I said, "God expects all of you to use your opportunities not only to help the people who have measles, but to show by what you do and how you do it that you belong to the Son of God."

CHAPTER VI

RECONNAISSANCE

"THERE we are, Daudi, there are six thermometers. Six exercise books all properly ruled up. There's enough cough mixture there to deal with hundreds of children, and eye-drops and droppers that should be sufficient to deal with millions and millions of eyes. Now take special care of those pulse glasses." These were miniature versions of the old-fashioned hour-glass, so made that the sand would trickle from one end to the other in exactly half a minute. With these our measles attacking squads had the chance to tell what were the respiration and pulse rates of their patients without using a watch, or as they preferred, an alarm clock. The chief advantage of these little glasses over watches and clocks was that pins could not be poked into them.

"Daudi," I said, "have you got the general idea of our plan of campaign? I will want six teams in all to go out. You will be in charge of one of them. This is the sort of thing I want you to do. You will go to a village and if everything goes well, and the Chief and the people are willing to accept your help, you will write down in your exercise book the name of each child, or person, who has measles. It is your work to record everything. Your second assistant will take the temperatures and count how many times a minute they breathe. Your third assistant will give the medicine as you order it and do any treatment you order. Your work will also be to see that the patients are looked after properly. We probably will have to change things a bit as we find

how things go. But that is the general plan as things stand at the moment."

All at once it seemed to get dark in the dispensary. I looked through the mosquito-gauze wire of the window and saw a great black cloud sweeping across the sky. Suddenly it seemed split by lightning which was followed almost at once by a crash of thunder, then the rain came. It pelted down.

It was impossible to see across the countryside. Water streamed from the heavily-leafed baobab tree, and the two-inch thorns dripped from every cruel point. There was a frenzied shifting of beds in the hospital to avoid the leaks that came through the roof. People dashed out into the downpour putting dishes, basins, tubs, anything that would hold water under the cascades that came from the roof. A minute's work now would save a mile walk to the wells.

As suddenly as it had started it stopped.

"*Yah*," said Daudi, "and when we go to-night, Bwana, it will be on foot through three miles of black mud, and then three more miles of black mud on the way back. *Kah!*"

The disgust that he put into this last typical African expression was more than warranted. We set out that evening, Daudi leading. I came second and behind me the wise old teacher named Mika. As we walked carefully down the slippery banks of a river-bed the old man said, "Bwana, in the German days, in the village where our hospital now is, more than half the children died in a month from measles. We could do nothing."

"*Yah*," said Daudi, "I was a child then and well I remember it. My elder brother and sister both died, but I got better."

"Yes, you got better," answered Mika, "but only because your mother was a woman who believed in God. She refused native treatment for you and behold you are alive."

"*Heeh*," said Daudi, "I was only three, but I can still remember the beating of tins and drums, all through the

village it was noise, people screaming, some of them to keep the children awake, some because their children would wake no more. Bwana, I can still feel those drums and those tins throbbing in my head."

"There," he said, raising a finger, "listen to them."

From far out over the plains came a faint sound. It meant nothing to me, but to Daudi it woke memories that he would never be able to blot out.

"Yah," he said, "I am going to avenge my brother and sister, avenge them a hundred times in this epidemic."

"How do you mean, Daudi?"

"Bwana, I am going to walk until my feet will walk no farther, I am going to talk till my tongue swells and with God's help we will save many lives."

The old man behind me said, "Be careful, Daudi, you are young, you have learned much wisdom, but don't forget that the people listen to the words of the witch-doctor and believe them rather than the words of the Bwana."

"Kumbe," said Daudi, "we must use all the wisdom we have."

"But," said the old man, "does it not say in God's book, 'if any man lacks wisdom let him ask of God'?"

"That's the idea," I answered, "we cannot deal with this problem by ourselves. We may know a cure for measles, or at any rate, be able to clear up the youngsters' noses and stop their coughs from turning to pneumonia, but we need the help of God that our planning may be wise, that our approach to these people may be friendly and without anger."

We stopped and in the warm darkness of the tropical night, briefly and definitely, asked Almighty God that our humble efforts to deal with this scourge amongst the child life of this great tribe in Central Tanganyika might not be blocked by any mistake that we should make. For perhaps ten minutes we walked on, each engrossed in his own thoughts. Daudi, who was walking in front with a hurricane lantern, picked his way carefully through a tangle of stunted bush. The thick black mud squelched

ankle deep beneath our feet, and I could feel it finding its way through the lace-holes of my shoes, and squelching clammily between my toes. Suddenly the light ahead of me disappeared. There was a crash and a gasp. I stopped and switched on my electric torch, and there below me sat Daudi, amidst the ruins of the hurricane lantern. The dim torch light seemed to stab the darkness and what it showed was extremely comical. The storm had torn a soil erosion channel some ten feet wide and three feet deep through this low-lying bit of country, and Daudi had just stepped into space. He sat there



looking up at me owlishly, still clinging to the handle of the lamp, which was twisted and utterly ruined.

A voice from behind me said, "*Yah! Yagwa!*" (He has fallen).

Daudi looked up at me and roared with laughter. "*Yah, Bwana, I was thinking deep thoughts and looking at the stars and, kah, I fell all right.*"

He got up covered with sticky black mud which gave off a peculiar and not very attractive aroma. With difficulty we pulled him out and made a detour.

"Now, Bwana," said Daudi, "you were very angry with young Kefa when he broke a lantern, I hope you will not have anger for me. Behold, the lamp is no more."

"You're forgiven, Daudi," I replied, "but it means another five shillings on to the hospital account, but I think it's fair to call that lamp a casualty."

We walked on more carefully for perhaps half a mile. Flickering ahead of us was a camp-fire and as we drew closer we could see dark faces silhouetted against the flickering light. The mud hut behind enlarged and distorted the shadows. I felt icy shivers going up my spine. In the background was a terrible din, the thumping of tins and the bashing of drums for no other reason than to make a noise. As we came into the firelight the men started to their feet. Mika was our spokesman.

"*Zosweru wenyu*" (Good evening to you), said he.

"*Ale zosweru nyenye*" (Good evening to you) they replied.

"The Bwana has come," said Mika, "to help the children who are sick, he has medicines."

A woman suddenly rushed past us screaming, her scream ending in a shrill high-pitched hysterical note. Everyone stopped and looked at her as she ran blindly into the darkness.

"What happened to her, Daudi?" I asked in an undertone.

He turned to one of the men, spoke a few words and then:

"Bwana, three of her children have died in two days."

The Chief had risen to his feet. "If the Bwana can help our children, we will receive his help." It sounded a stiff sort of speech, but I knew that it meant that our first barrier had been overcome.

With my torch full on I went round the village. The flat-roofed, mud-walled huts built enclosing the cattle-yards each held its tragedy. Outside one house sat an old woman moaning. I bent down beside her. "What's wrong, grandmother?"

"*Yah*," she said, "my grandchildren are no more, all of them, all of them——"

Somewhere in the background I could see vague shadows moving.

"What are they doing, Daudi?" I whispered.

"Bwana," he replied, "they do not bury the children, they just take them out into the forest and leave them."

The eerie howl of a hyena answered my unasked question, and then I saw my first African-treated measles cases. In the smoky atmosphere of a little hut six little people lay huddled together on a grass mat, their eyes matted with discharge, their noses streaming and one of them breathing at a rate which showed clearly that he was on the verge of pneumonia. Beside them were three other little folk, including the baby who had not contracted the disease.

"Quickly, Daudi, let's get to work."

We did what we could for them. They were given



cough mixture loaded with a sedative so strong that they would sleep notwithstanding the row.

"Bwana," whispered Daudi, "let us go outside and pretend to go away and watch what happens."

Five minutes after leaving we peered through a crack in the mud wall. Already two of the children had fallen asleep, the sleep of exhaustion. An old woman was shaking one. He woke with a start. The second child she could not rouse, so I saw her pour cold water over him, and then drag him out into the night breeze. Daudi produced an outburst of words so forceful that the old woman disappeared and the children were soon made comfortable and put to sleep. Mika arrived with the Chief and we gave our instructions, promising that next day a flying squad would arrive to treat the children. We urged that the children should be allowed to sleep that night, and the Chief promised that our orders would be obeyed.

My visit to the various houses meant that seven little folk in the early stages of pneumonia would be carried to the hospital first thing next morning. As I said farewell to the Chief he said, "Bwana, we greatly welcome your help, but at Chibaya, the next village, they will have nothing to do with you or your medicines."

He came himself with us for the first few hundred yards of our journey, and then bidding us *walamuse* (farewell) he returned to his house.

CHAPTER VII

DEFEAT OF AN ALLY

IMMEDIATELY in front was a well-marked path, bearing off to the right.

"Where does that road go to?" I asked.

"Bwana, that goes to Chibaya. It can be travelled only by foot since it goes through some very deep *mako-longo*" (creeks).

"Come on," I said, "now we're spying out the ground, let's go to the worst places of all and see what Chibaya really is like."

"Bwana," said Mika, "if I were you I wouldn't go. They're bad men there. They have sworn that they will not have anything to do with your medicines."

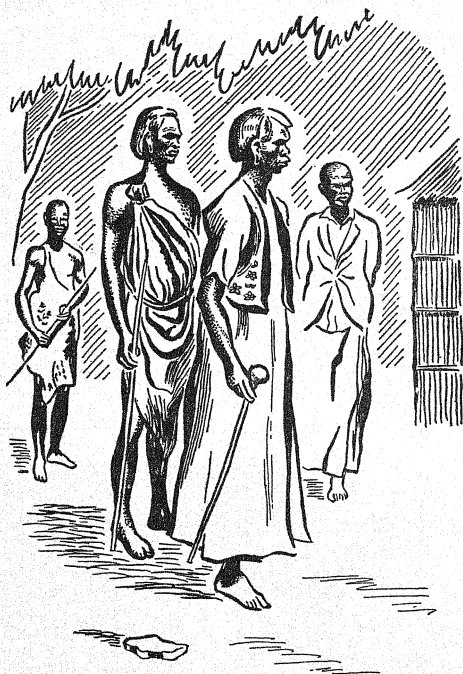
"All the more reason why we should go," I said.

Shaking his head the old African said, "Bwana, it will open doors of trouble."



By the light of our one remaining hurricane lamp we went towards the hostile village. There was a rustling in the scrub beside the path. I shone my torch on it, and saw a large hyena slinking out of view. As I focused the torch on it I noticed the battery was very weak; after I had swung the torch around once or twice more it faded to a faint glimmer.

"Yah," said the old African,



"let us return while we have light. Behold, the night is late already, we have but one lantern."

But having come so far I was loth to turn back. We could see the fires of Chibaya, and hear the beat of their drums.

"*Yah*," said Daudi, "that is not a good dance, Bwana."

On the night wind came the reek of native beer. From one end of the village came the high scream of a woman. The sound was almost drowned by the hectic throb of drums.

"*Yah*," said Daudi, "it's a bad place, Bwana."

Coming into the firelight I greeted the men who were copiously done up for the dance—mud in their hair, various decorations in red and blue. The Chief, who was dressed in a long flowing garment, called a *kanzu*, had over it his famous decorated waistcoat from which he gained his name.

He was not a little drunk, and seemed determined to make himself a nuisance. Several of the warriors picked up spears and sticks and stood round.

"Chief," I said, "I have come to offer my help if there are any children in the village who are suffering from *serenyenyi*."

"There are no sick people in my village," said Chikoti in a thick voice, "and also, we do not want your medicine."

"Is there any profit in losing the lives of the young people of your village?" I asked.

"*Koh*," said the Chief, "we do not want the medicine of the *wazungu* (the white men). Have we not our own *waganga*?" (witch-doctors).

"But what of your womenfolk," I said, "have they joy in seeing their children die? Do they suffer for nothing?"

"*Kah*," said Chikoti violently. "Is this village run by women?"

Things were looking definitely ugly. Daudi said to me in English, "Bwana, it is better that we should return. When there is much *wujimbi* (beer) there is little wisdom.

Let us try other ways. This *shauri* (discussion) will only lead to big trouble, Bwana."

Nodding my assent I turned to Chikoti. "We have powerful medicines for coughs and can draw the teeth of the strongest pain."

"*Huh*," said one of the youths from round the fire, "we do not want the herbs you cook."

This sally produced a high-pitched cackle of laughter. I went to the far side of the fire, and as I did so I noticed the weird shadows thrown on the mud walls of the native houses behind—there was something fantastic and devilish about them. I went to pick up my lantern, but before I could reach it a drunken dancer crashed into it and the lantern was wrecked.

Once again came that high-pitched cackle of hostile laughter.

"Bwana," said the old African teacher urgently, "it is better for us to find our way home in the dark than that we should stay in this evil place. Are they not waiting for an excuse to make bad trouble?"

A huge clay pot of beer had just been brought, and the dancers round the fire were drinking it noisily. Drums throbbed again—there was something obscene about their rhythm. We walked off into the darkness, gauging our way from the Southern Cross which was low down on the horizon. Clouds were rushing over the sky and suddenly the stars seemed to go out, and an intense, ominous blackness surrounded us. This was split by sudden lightning, showing us in cold white light the dangers of the path that we were travelling. It seemed to me that all manner of strange and dangerous shapes lurked there. Behind us at Chibaya came the sound of revelling and drunken laughter.

"*Yoh*," said Mika. "Behold, are they not laughing at us and at our way, and are they not laughing at God? Behold, do they not follow the ways of *shaitani*?" (the devil).

For five minutes we walked on, the track becoming rougher and rougher, and then Daudi said, "Bwana, we're lost. We are off the path, and we seem to be going

from one creek into another. Bwana, in front of us is just thorn-bush and the swamp called *Chipoko*."

There were ten matches left in the box. I struck one after the other, but the high wind quickly blew them out. Just beyond us a hyena howled. There was an expectant note in its voice that I did not like. Then the thunder crashed, and following it there was dead silence. In the silence came a voice: "Bwana—Bwana."

"Who is it?" I asked. "Who calls?"

"Bwana, it is I, Mubofu."

"Where are you?"

Daudi put out his hand. "Bwana, hold my hand, we will walk towards his voice."

In a moment or so we came to where the blind boy was standing in the middle of the path.

"Bwana," he said, "I heard all that happened, and I crept away from my house in the darkness. Behold, Bwana, when you live as I do, in the land of darkness, day and night are the same, and the path to the hospital is known to me, whether the sun shines or not. Behold, now in the darkness, you know for a short time how I always feel. You feel something of the terrors of blackness, and, Bwana, it is here that I am useful. Many times people have led me by the hand, but to-night it is I who will lead you."

I put my hand in his black one, and with Daudi's hand on my shoulder, and Mika's hand on his shoulder, we set out on the four-mile walk back to the hospital on the hill.



CHAPTER VIII

SCARS

THE last mile of our walk back from Chibaya had been in heavy rain. We had to wade through three torrents of red muddy water from the hills—in the last of these I had slipped, and I was not only bedraggled, but very muddy. While I paused to get my breath back on the bank Daudi suddenly exclaimed, "*Ulange, Wuzeru* (see a light,) Bwana."

"It must be the hospital," said Mika. "Where else would there be lights at this time of night?"

Beside me I felt Mubofu stiffen. "If you can see now, Bwana, there is no need for me to lead any more."

"You are still greatly needed, *Wayiko*, (old chap) the light is only like a small star."

We started again and the light gradually became larger as Mubofu unhesitatingly lead up the track, from time to time warning us sharply of some rut or twist or stone. The light on the hill proved to be not in the hospital, but in the window of my own house. I found the kitchen door open and on the stove a kettle was boiling



merrily. Mubofu was shivering, getting as close as he could to the fire. Water dripped from his tattered loin cloth. I made tea and poured out a cup for each of my companions—Daudi took four teaspoonfuls of sugar. I put a similar amount into Mubofu's cup. The warmth of the drink was very comforting.

I turned to Mubofu. "You want to stay at the hospital to-night, my friend. We will give you a blanket and a mat and you may sleep in the room where Daudi makes medicines."

The African lad shook his head vigorously. "*N'go*, *n'go* (No, no), Bwana. I must get back to my village. Have I not work to do? Is not this my task—to bring the people who are sick to the hospital? Must I not do my work by night?"

"But you're cold and it's a very bad night for anyone to be out. Would it not be better for you to rest quietly here to-day . . ."

The African lad interrupted me. "No, Bwana, I must do this work. Apart from myself, who is there in Chibaya who cares for God? Did you not see them this evening? Behold, will they not be very drunk before long? And then while their wisdom is sleeping perhaps I can find those who need hospital help and who could come quietly in the night. Behold, get them to the hospital, Bwana, and you will be able to help them."

"*Linji*" (perhaps), I said, "but did we not see Chikoti and is he not a bad man? If you do these things quietly will he not be very angry and come to the hospital with much noise?"

Daudi shook his head. "No, Bwana, I don't think he will make much noise, but he will make much trouble."

"*Kah*," I said, "I fear that there will be much *matata* (trouble) coming out of this thing."

"Bwana," said the blind boy, putting his hand on my shoulder, "are you afraid of trouble when it means that people will be saved from much sickness, and you will have the chance of telling the people of my village about God?"

"No, my friend," I replied, "I am not frightened of *matata* nor its consequences to myself, but what about you?"

"*Kah*, Bwana, must I only show my thanks to Jesus in a safe way? If there is pain in the work that lies ahead, was there no pain when they killed my Master?"

There was silence in the kitchen. A few moths beat their wings against the glass of the hurricane lantern, and on the roof great drops of rain from the baobab tree beside the house splashed noisily on the corrugated iron.

Mubofu was the first to speak. "Bwana," said he, "a moment ago when my hand was on your arm I felt scars."

As I looked down I saw the vaccination marks on my arm. "Yes," I said, "those are the marks that show me that I need have no fear of the disease called smallpox which is very much worse than measles can ever be."

"*Hongo*, Bwana," said the African, "how can you be sure of that?"

"Why," I said, "haven't hundreds and thousands of people been treated in this way? It has been proved by what has happened to them. Have they not walked through places where there is much of this trouble and have they not been free from it?"

Mubofu shook his head. "But, *kah*, Bwana, this is a thing of wonder. Tell me, how does it work?"

There as we sat in front of the fire I told him the story of Dr. Jenner and how he had found the value of vaccination. The blind boy was all interest and wanting to know details.

"But, Bwana, how . . . how does it work? How do they do things?"

"They take a calf," I answered, "and give it this complaint, which is called Cow Pox, then they collect from the calf what they call lymph—they scratch your arm with a needle and then put a little of this lymph into the scratch. Behold, you get a little of the trouble, and you are then free from the danger of the disease, smallpox."

"*Kumbe*, Bwana," said Mubofu, "but what happens to the calf?"

"Oh," I replied, "they care for the calf very well, they see that it does not suffer unnecessarily."

"But, Bwana, mightn't the calf die of the disease?"

"Yes, it might, but it's very unlikely."

"But, Bwana, if it did would it not be very happy if it could know that it had saved people from a very bad disease?"

Daudi broke into the conversation. "Mubofu, do you not understand that that is exactly what Jesus did? Calves cannot understand, but Jesus knew before He came into the world that He would die, to cure us from the worst disease that there is—the disease of sin which would keep us from eternal life."

Mubofu nodded. "I understand; and is it not because I understand, that I am going back to my village to-night?"

His finger moved quietly up my arm. "Bwana, I wish I had scars on my arm like yours. It would give me comfort, and I would not feel the danger of the disease of smallpox."

I poured out another cup of tea. "Listen, my friend, and I will tell you the story of a man who lived when Jesus was on earth. He said, that unless he could touch the scars in Jesus' hands and the spear wounds in His side he would not believe that He had come to life again."

"Kah, Bwana," said Mubofu, "but Jesus died and He was buried. Did He not die? He is not alive!"

"That's the point," I replied, "that is why our faith in Jesus is a faith worth having. Do not many of the *Wahindi* (the Indians) follow a prophet called Mohammed? He was a man and he died. But Jesus claimed to be God's own Son; He said while He was alive on earth that He would rise from the dead three days after He was buried; and He did. Was He not seen by hundreds of people?"

"Kah," said Mubofu, "that is a thing of wonder. He is alive?"

"Truly," I said, "we serve a living Master, not a dead

memory. Was there not one of His own followers, whose name was Thomas, who did not believe, even when he heard the words of those who had seen Jesus alive? He did not believe, and he said, 'unless I can put my fingers in the scars in His hands and the scars in His side, I will not believe.'

"One night many of Jesus' followers were all together in one room. Thomas the doubter was there. The doors were all shut but suddenly Jesus was amongst them. He greeted them and He turned straight to Thomas and said, 'Feel the scars in My hands, the scars in My feet, the scar in My side.' In a second Thomas's doubts disappeared and he said, 'My Lord and my God.'"

The African lad in front of me stood in silence. Then I saw his hand move slowly to his face, and touch his eyes, scarred through the touch of disease, and the hopeless futility of native medicine and treatment. Daudi put his hand on the boy's shoulder.

"Mubofu," he said, "there is no shame in a scar—it may be your scar will prove to be the way of healing to those who are very sick and even at this minute are groaning."

Mubofu reached for the stick that was beside him, picked it up, and said, "Well, Bwana, I must return to my village. Behold, there is work for me to do."

"Before you go," I said, "let us all talk to our living Master, and tell Him of our work and our difficulties."

A few minutes later I watched the blind boy walking confidently off into the darkness. He had only gone a few steps when he was lost in the blackness of the night. We stood at the door watching, and suddenly the whole place was lightened by a flash of lightning. Well on his way, in the very centre of the track, was Mubofu, walking confidently towards one of the most sinister villages in the whole of the central plain of Tanganyika.

CHAPTER IX

CHIBAYA

DAUDI and I stood at the kitchen door for a few moments longer, looking down the track, hoping to catch a last glimpse of Mubofu as he walked through the millet gardens and the thorn-bush, but he seemed to be completely swallowed up in the darkness.

"Bwana," said Daudi, "it is a good thing in many ways that this night is wet. Behold, there are not many animals about on a night like this and his journey is safer that way. Also, there are no snakes. *Kumbe!* this must be his biggest danger, for he cannot see them, and often they will move right out into the path at night; is it not warmer there?"

I listened to the musical sound of water running into our large storage tank.

"Daudi," I said, "apart from Mubofu, is there anybody at Chibaya who is likely to help us even though his help may only be very small?"

The African dispenser thought for a moment.

"Yes, Bwana, there is a man who will help, I think. His name is Ndogowe (the donkey). Behold, was he not the man who looked after Chikoti's white donkey? Did he not get into very bad trouble and was he not saved from it by the skill of Bibi Dobson, who was nurse here before you came? But, Bwana, that is a long story. Behold, I will tell it to you as we go on safari one day."

"Right, I have need of sleep now, behold, there is much work ahead of us."

Daudi splashed off towards his home at the hospital after bidding me "*Kwa heri*" (good-bye).



Soon I was in bed. The rain had ceased, but the wind was blowing strongly and shutters (made from kerosene box wood) were rattling noisily. As I dozed off, this squeak seemed to be mixed up somehow with the wailing of a broken-hearted mother that I had heard at the village of Chibaya earlier in the evening. I seemed to have slept only a few minutes before I was wakened by a voice outside the fly-wire of my window saying: "Bwana, *hodi* (may I come in), Bwana?"

"*Nhawule?*" (What's up?) I asked.

"Bwana," there was urgency in the tone, "it is I, Mubofu, am I not here with many sick ones?"

I glanced at my watch. It was five in the morning. Turning my torch to the window, I saw Mubofu standing with a child of seven on his back, a boy who looked so desperately ill that I wondered for a moment if he was alive. I could see three or four other people vaguely standing against the white-washed wall of the house. I pulled on some clothes and my mosquito boots and came outside.

"Come," I said, "let us go at once to the hospital."

All traces of the storm of a few hours before had disappeared. Eerily through the standing corn came the laugh of a hyena. The little procession did not seem to hear. I took them into my examination room, calling the African night nurse as I did so. I lifted the child from Mubofu's back. Although the night was cold and he was dressed only in a loin cloth, his skin seemed to burn. As I laid him back on the couch, he coughed. The effort of it seemed to be too much for him. His chest moved up and down spasmodically for a moment before he was able to breathe again and I noticed that he was breathing three times as fast as Mubofu who stood beside him. He was one of perhaps hundreds who would develop pneumonia if this epidemic was left to itself. "Who is he, Mubofu?"

"His name is Mazengo, Bwana, and he is the grandson of Chikoti. Does he not come with me *chinyele* (secretly) to hear the words of God on Sunday?"

I whistled, and lighting a methylated spirits lamp, heated a test-tube and prepared an injection, which I gave to the small boy.

The blind boy moved close to me. "Bwana, what are you doing?"

I told him. "In this instrument which has a sharp needle on it I have medicine which brings sleep and quietness. Behold, is not your friend very tired after his journey?"

"Yoh, Bwana, I too am tired. Have I not carried him all the way on my back?"

He sank down wearily on a box. I gave Mazengo the injection and a few moments later I saw him being taken to the ward in the arms of one of the dispensers. Perisi, the night nurse, came to me.

"Bwana," she said, "there are two women here with small children. Both of them have measles. Both of these children are very sick, but, behold, each of these women tells me that two of their children have died, and they have come to the hospital for help. They see no hope in *Gogo* medicine."

"Right," I said, "make beds for them in the small room that we use to store the kerosene and the soap and blankets. Behold, it is a good thing that our stocks are very low. Give them medicine and make them as comfortable as you can."

Perisi nodded.

"Mubofu," I said, "you have been up all the night. You have had much work. Behold, you must rest now."

The small blind boy shook his head. "Bwana," he said, "I must leave the hospital before it is light. Behold I do not want the people of my village to know who it is who has done this work. If they did know, things might happen and I might not be able to help others."

Seeing that it was useless to detain him I unlocked the door of the store and cut off a large chunk of sugar. I put this into his hand. "Go home and sleep in the daytime and eat this on the way."

As he took it from me I said, "Mubofu, let me give you not only food for your body, but let me give you a message from God's book about which you may think to-day and in the days which are to come, as we fight for people's bodies and their souls. Once there was a man called Joshua whom God picked out as one who would do work for Him. When He gave him his orders this is what He said—and the words He said to Joshua, Mubofu, He says to you—"I will be with thee, and I will not fail thee nor forsake thee; be strong and of good courage."

"*Kah, Bwana*," said the African boy, "those are great words. Behold, since you told me that He is a living Saviour I have had great joy in my heart, and now you tell me that He will be with me, why, Bwana, I will do everything I can to serve Him."

"Remember, old chap, though, that you must have sleep if you are going to carry this work through."

"Truly, Bwana, but the work must be done secretly, for behold, the Chief will stop people from coming to hospital very quickly if he finds how they are going."

Half-way through the morning Daudi came to see me. "Bwana," said he, "I have found the man Ndogowe, who was bitten by the donkey. Bwana, he says, we have no need of fear of trouble from the village for at least two days, for has not the Chief been drinking very much beer, and also *nghangala*?" (native mead).

This I knew to be a highly potent drink made from bush honey, and I thought that even so experienced a drinker as Chikoti would be out of circulation for at least two days.

"Daudi, you promised the other day to tell me about this fellow Ndogowe."

The African dispenser smiled. "*Kah, Bwana*, what a story it is. You know that donkey that Chikoti rides, the white one?"

I nodded.

"Behold, it is a very valuable ass and therefore badly spoiled and very cranky. Does not the Chief have it fed on porridge like a child? Well, one day Ndogowe brought

the animal's food in a dish, but the donkey was in a bad temper and snapped at him and bit off the end of his nose." Daudi put his thumb in his fingers illustrating just how much had been removed.

"Heeh, Daudi, what then?"

"Bwana, it's hard to believe. He picked up his nose, or rather, the bit that was bitten off, jumped on the Chief's bicycle, and rode hard to the hospital. *Yah*, Bwana, what a mess. *Heeh*, it makes my insides creep even now. But Bibi Dobson was not upset. She bathed his nose, boiled up a needle and some horse-hair and sewed it on again. Then she put a dressing on it and put everything in place with cotton wool and sticking plaster."

"Hongo, Daudi, but what happened, did it heal quite all right?"

"Yes, Bwana, that was the amazing thing, it healed without any trouble whatsoever. The only thing that worried him was that the tip of the nose wasn't quite in the same place as it was before the donkey bit it."

"Was he happy about it all?"

"Eeh, Bwana, was he happy? Why, he talked and talked and brought us pawpaws and sweet potatoes and then at Christmas time he brought a young goat, which we killed and cooked, and Bibi said she had never tasted a lamb like it!"

I laughed. "But tell me, Daudi, what help are we going to get from this man?"

"Well, Bwana, all we can hope for is that he will tell



us what is happening in the village. He will not do anything, but he will be eyes and ears for us in a place where we have very few to help."

"What a team we've got in Chibaya to fight against this epidemic, Daudi—a blind boy and a man whose nose was bitten off by a donkey."

CHAPTER X

REPORTS

I SAT with four sheets of paper in front of me. The heat was terrific. Through the window I could see the plain—in the middle of it a beautiful blue stretch of water. You felt irresistibly drawn to its blue coolness, but I knew that just where the lake appeared to be there was nothing but dry uncultivable land, scarred by soil erosion. It was a mirage.

Daudi came in. "What do you see through the door, Daudi?"

My African friend laughed. "I see much water which one cannot drink."

He sank down wearily on a stool opposite me.

"*Yah*, Bwana, and it's just like many of the difficult people I have been trying to help in this battle against measles."

He picked up one of the reports. With a wry smile on his black face he said, "Bwana, you see I took all the difficult places. The very easy ones where they wanted our help I sent Kefa and with him went Hilda. Kefa is a mild man, but Hilda, although very small, *h-e-e-e-h* she's got a tongue, and behold, she can, she can—what are the English words, Bwana?"

"Tick off," I replied.

"*Ndio*," said Daudi, "she can tick off people who are difficult and will not obey. *Yah*, how she can tick them off!"

I laughed and read at the bottom of Kefa's report, "107 children treated in 3 villages, 3 families difficult, dealt with by Hilda, while I went next door and took the temperatures." I read this to Daudi who laughed.

"I would like to have been there, Bwana."

"That's all right," I replied, "you are not bad at ticking people off yourself!"

"Ah, Bwana, but I tick them very gently, very gently indeed. You see, there was the Chief at Makangwa; he refused to allow me to take medicine to the children of his town, and then he asked me for pills to deal with his headache, so I told him that headaches could be due to many things. They were due to mosquito bites, which give malaria, and I told him of the Chief who had died from very bad malaria. It brought him no joy to hear this."

I sat back in my chair and laughed.

"And then, I suppose, Daudi, you told him about meningitis and sun-stroke?"

"Yes, Bwana, I did, and eye-troubles, and the very bad sort that send you blind; in fact I told of every disease that I could think of and when he was thoroughly worried I told him there were no pills for him unless the measles children were treated as well. He agreed, so I promised medicine *after* the children had been treated. *Heh*, Bwana, there were sixty-three sick children in that village alone, and forty or more had already died. There will be a big change there now." He yawned. "Since before dawn, Bwana, we have been at it; telling them to sweep out their houses—the filth, the cockroaches, ugh!"

He wrinkled his nose humorously.

"But I have got the children fixed now. I have been putting in eye-drops, telling them what to do, *yah*, my arms have ached; I have counted pulses and breathing, and watched chests being rubbed, I have walked away from the village and then come back running to make sure they were not following the ways of the witch-doctor." He produced a note-book. "Seventeen new children are coming in. They are probably pneumonic. And, *yah*, Bwana." Again he stretched and yawned.

"Are you tired, Daudi?"

"Not tired, Bwana, I don't yawn when I'm tired, but I yawn when I'm hungry."

"*Heh*," said a voice from outside. Samson's smiling face appeared.

"Behold, you must have a famine inside you if you are like me, Bwana," said he. "Daudi gave me what he thought would be the hardest village."

"*Yah*," said Daudi, "I did not, I kept them for myself."

"Well," said Samson, "if mine were easy ones, your work must have been bad. Bwana, there was a Chief who wouldn't help, he wouldn't let me into his village. He, by the way, is a friend of Chikoti. He forbade people to follow our way; he said if anyone followed our way that they would die, and I began to despair, but very quietly with my eyes open I prayed to God, and asked Him to help, and it was then that an old man came out of a house. He was a relation of the Chief's, a visitor. He walked over to me and greeted me and said to the Chief, 'They have the medicines that work at that hospital and the Bwana there, although he is a white man, can do things which we are unable to do with our witch-doctors' medicine. Behold, was I not blind, did I not pay out cows and goats to the *waganga* and yet nothing happened? *Keh*,' said he in disgust, 'I tried many medicines, many charms, but still darkness, but the Bwana worked with his little knife and I can see——'"

"Who was he, Samson?" I asked.

"*Heeh*," said Samson, "that's the joke, he's the old man who refused to pay his 'thank you' when you did his cataract operation because he said he was no better. He stormed at you. He said that the hospital was no good, and that the witch-doctor had the best medicines."

"*Yah*," said Daudi, "he said things that the Bwana could not understand, but which you and I did! I remember feeling hot under my skin."

"Well," said Samson, "do you remember that instead of saying angry words the Bwana said to him that he would ask God that his eyes might get completely better and then the Bwana told us of the words of King Solomon that 'a soft answer turns away wrath.'"

"I remember," said Daudi, "and I thought the Bwana was wrong."

"Well," said Samson, "he wasn't, for this old man had nothing but good to say about our work, and behold, because of his words I treated thirty children in that village. The Chief came with me and when one man refused treatment the Chief threatened to fine him; and drops were put into the children's eyes and the people who beat kerosene tins to keep the children awake were silenced, and Bwana, I have a new way of helping to keep the children quiet."

"And what's that, Samson?"

The African grinned. "Behold, Bwana, many people come asking for medicine for headaches, for pains in their joints, and I give them not only the aspirin pills, but the bromide pills as well. Behold, they are tired already, when they take the bromide pills they sleep for many hours very quietly."

Daudi laughed. "Bwana, that's an old trick."

"*Yah*," said Samson, "but it's a good trick."

I took up the papers: my measles flying squads in one day had treated 500 children. They had found twelve cases of pneumonia and two of severe eye trouble. These little folk were already in hospital receiving treatment and their recovery was assured. It was only a matter of time and they would be well. I picked up my pencil and wrote out orders for the next day. As I turned round from my table Kefa appeared at the door.

"Bwana," said he, "it's now *saa humi* (four o'clock) I have not yet eaten, but *yah*, I have had a good day."

The mere mention of the word "eating" made Daudi yawn again.

Kefa went on, "Bwana, I have seen children who would have died and who would have been blind all their lives made better almost at once by our treatment."

"Wait a minute, Kefa," I answered, "we may have made them more comfortable, but there's going to be a week of hard work ahead of us."

Daudi nodded. "Truly, Bwana, we must not rest on what we have done because the witch-doctors will be very busy."

Danyeli came in looking exhausted. "*Kah*, Bwana, to-day has been to no profit at all. Did I not go to the east to the part of the country where Chikoti has much influence? It was a day of words and words, but I have not given out an eye-drop or a dose of medicine. We received abuse and heard whispers that trouble is brewing for the hospital."

I gave instructions regarding the next day's treatment and then went round the hospital seeing who could be sent home to make room for all the pneumonia kiddies who were coming in. In the Nurses' Quarters I heard a rather shrill voice—Hilda.

"*Yah*," she said, "you know that old woman who scrapes the children's throats with her finger-nails?"

A chorus of grunts apparently indicated that the off-duty nurses did know this dreadful old African woman, who had been directly responsible for some seven deaths to my knowledge.

"Well," went on Hilda's voice, "she attacked me. I told Kefa to go away—he's only a man and not very strong in argument—did I fix her? Oh! did I fix her? I said to her, 'Do you not come to our hospital when there are pains in your bones? Do you not bring yourself and drink our medicines? Are you not rubbed with our liniment? Do you not use a whining voice and ask for the white pills to take home with you? And yet when we come with our medicines to save the lives of the children



you object.' Yah," said Hilda, "I talked so that the women would laugh at her."

The old African matron who, by the way, was Hilda's grandmother, laughed.

"It's better," she said, "that people should laugh at her than any other way. If you are rude they say they are the words of a youngster, if you are angry people will not listen to you. Truly, you have followed the right path."

I went on to the ward. There were children in the cots and on the floor, all of them sound asleep, utterly weary after days of being kept forcibly awake. There were a number of glasses of medicine on the table, under each a slip of paper with the name of the patient who would receive it. The African nurse in charge of the ward whispered in my ear.

"I will give them medicine when they wake, Bwana. Did you not say that sleep is important in pneumonia, for if they do not sleep they will die?"

Coming up the hill to the hospital I saw three little processions. It was the same story in each case—measles, then a cough and then pneumonia. Each child was given an injection and sent off to the ward. The nurse pointed with her chin to three cots, "Mubofu brought those in, Bwana. *Kah!* how he works, he comes and goes like a shadow."

I was just leaving the hospital when Daudi appeared.

"Yah," said he, "we are doing a work these days that will set the tongues of the people talking throughout the country."

"Truly, Daudi," I answered, "the thing that cheers me is to remember that it is the work we have done before which seemed a failure, that is making it possible for us to do all we are doing."

"Behold, Bwana," said Daudi, "does not God's Book say, 'Cast your bread upon the waters and you will find it after many days?'"

CHAPTER XI

AN ENEMY SPY

CONGESTION is hardly the right word to describe the condition of our hospital accommodation. It was completely packed. There were children with measles recovering in the room that we used for storing our supplies. On the door was written *wachiba hadodo* (the somewhat better ones). They were not in beds, but lying on the floor, each with a blanket and a palm-leaf mat. There were twenty children—all of them very sick with measles—lying in beds and improvised cots on what was usually our veranda, but now was closed in with great strips of canvas which originally had been part of an old safari tent, which had taken the fancy of the local white ants. To make up for the shortness of space the beds were pushed close together, their occupants alternately looking north and south so that looking down the line you saw head, then toes, then head, then toes and so on. There was just room for the nurse to walk between the rows of beds and cots when she went in to put drops in children's eyes and to give them cough mixture, which was so very highly praised as a medicine by the concourse of relations in which grandmothers predominated.

In the ordinary children's ward with its nine beds, we now had eighteen little people—four of them very ill with pneumonia. We had to resort to the unhospital-like trick of putting two children in a bed. Propped up on pillows they looked at each other across the blankets. Drastically sick pneumonia cases were in the room that we had used for our drug store-room; while in the place

which we used for prayers and quiet times an ancient blanket tucked over the windows kept the glare out of the eyes of fourteen children suffering either from eye ulcers or a variety of other eye complications associated with measles and pneumonia.

Going through the list of patients I found that many of them came from miles away, the vast majority from a group of villages where we had C.M.S. churches and schools. There were those from the far-away district of Manhumbulu where the Chief's son had had pneumonia. He had suffered no ill-effects from his midnight trip a fortnight before and he was up and about again. To the people of his village this was little less than miraculous, and as a consequence a lot of folk had come in from there before the dreaded pneumonia had developed. This was no light thing. It was a surprising fact that we had no less than fifteen patients from the village of Chibaya. They, without exception, had come in as a result of the efforts of our little blind friend Mubofu, whose activities had been helped by the fact that the men of his village had had a tremendous beer drink which had produced a considerable hangover. Under cover of darkness Mubofu had carried in many children on his back—a four-mile journey. He had told some of the bolder women to come themselves and bring their children. To the mothers who were frightened he smuggled eye-drops and cough mixture and told them the story of how the children in hospital were recovering and why. He urged them to let the children sleep and to give them frequent drinks and sweetened gruel, all of which was contrary to custom. He had been little short of heroic.

I saw Daudi coming towards the door. He looked completely exhausted.

"Come in, Daudi, and sit down. Have you had a heavy day?"

"Bwana," he said, "the epidemic is not as strong as it was in most places, but in others it is very very much worse. *Yah . . .*" He sank back in a chair. "Bwana, it's good to rest."

"Young Mubofu isn't resting much. It's amazing what that boy is doing."

Daudi nodded. "Bwana, it was about him that I came to speak to you. I am frightened. I think that the village of Chibaya is going to strike back. Things have gone our way for too long. When Mubofu comes to-night, Bwana, with the children he's collected during the day, I suggest that we keep him here. I have warnings from Ndogowe, the donkey man, that Chikoti knows who it is bringing the children here, and that he has planned mischief. Behold, the Chief is as subtle as a snake. He may not strike now, but he has evil plans for our little friend, and I have fears."

It was nearly midnight when I heard a whispered "*Hodi*," at my window. I recognized my little blind friend's voice, and hurried outside.

"Two to-night, Bwana," said he, "one just has measles. So she was able to walk all by herself; but the other one, Bwana, I had to carry. I heard him grunting as he breathed. Did you not say the other day that this is what people do when they're getting pneumonia?"

"Why," I said, "you're becoming quite a doctor yourself."

He laughed, and there was sheer joy in it. "Bwana," he said, "I've never been so happy in all my life."

I looked at the child on his back and together we walked up to the hospital. During the last fortnight we had made that trip nearly every night. More than half of the children who had come as the result of these secret safaris would either have died or gone blind if they had been left without hospital care. Mubofu strode in front of me, absolutely certain of every step he took. It was uncanny the way he seemed to know every twist and turn of the path. He held his head high. Somehow we fitted in our two new cases, and I took the blind boy back with me to my kitchen, and gave him a cup of tea and a huge chunk of iced cake.

He said, "Bwana, behold, this is wonderful food. It must be on such food that angels live."

Somehow the lad had grown in that last month.

I laughed and put my hand on his shoulder. "Mubofu, do you remember the day we were in the Cathedral of Dodoma, where you asked about Heaven?"

He nodded. "Kah, Bwana, do I not think very much these days of Heaven and God?"

"I very often think that way, too, Mubofu. Many people will get a very great shock when they do get to Heaven. They have asked Jesus to save them from the pain and punishment of sin, but they have never done anything to show their thankfulness to Him in the way that He told them to do in His Book."

"Kah," said the blind boy, "behold, people like that have no gratitude. Bwana. They do not deserve a Saviour."

"True," I said, "but think of the people who, to show their thankfulness to God for all that He has done for them, set to work and follow up His instructions. These are the words from God's Book. He said to these people, 'Come, My Father's blessed ones, inherit the kingdom prepared for you ever since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you gave me a welcome. I was ill-clad and you clothed me, I was ill and you visited me.' But when, Lord Jesus, did we see You hungry, thirsty, a stranger, ill-clad or ill? And then Jesus will answer, 'In truth I tell you, that in so far as you rendered such services to one of the humblest of these my brethren you rendered them to Myself.'"

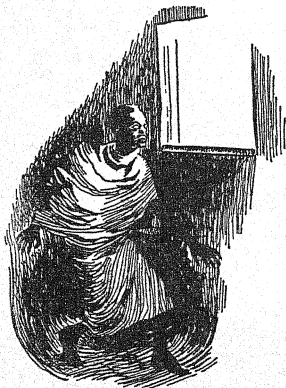
"Bwana," said the African boy, "now you know why I must get back to my village to please Him."



Even as he spoke Mubofu put his hand on my arm and raised a finger. "Bwana, quietly, there's someone moving outside. It is the movement of a man who does not want to be heard."

I listened and could hear absolutely nothing.

"There it is," whispered Mubofu, "I hear him again. He's coming round just beside the tank, Bwana, he's been listening at the window, he's now going away."



I screwed up an old newspaper that was on the table and lit it from the fire. When it was blazing I flung the door wide open and dashed out into the darkness. I was barely in time to see a dark figure blending with the shadows of the thorn-bush not far from the house. My torch burnt out and we were again in darkness. But for the crickets the whole night seemed to be still. I found Mubofu at my side.

"Bwana," said he, "there are those who have no joy because of the work of the hospital."

Mubofu's tone was very serious. "Bwana, you must be very careful to see that no harm comes to yourself. Behold, perhaps these people have bad will towards you. They may try to do you harm."

I had no fears for myself but I did have fears for my little African friend. I knew just what witch-doctors could do. I didn't pass these thoughts on to Mubofu, however. Cutting him another slice of cake I wished him good night and God-speed and saw him walk off into the darkness of the night.

CHAPTER XII

ENEMY ATTACK

COMING into the house I sat down to write up my log. In a quarter of an hour only three or four lines were written. Somehow the words didn't come evenly. There were drums, drums, drums throbbing in Chikoti's village. They beat like a pulse in an aching head. I pulled a piece of paper out of the writing pad, screwed it up and threw it into the waste-paper basket and tried again. But still things were no better. I did my best to describe the situation. I tried to draw a picture of the ward, crowded to capacity with two children in one bed, with children packed in every corner of the hospital, many of them on the floor, with relations who wouldn't do what they were told—but the words simply wouldn't come, and all my efforts ended in a clumsy group of sentences. Even when I tried to tell the story of the school children's efforts in the construction of the new ward it read drably. I couldn't get those drums out of my consciousness—they throbbed and throbbed. I put down my pen and said to myself, "Look, this is a poor show. Make yourself a cup of tea and then settle down and write."

I had the cup of tea and then settled down and started to write, but it was no good. I wasn't in the mood for writing, nor was I in the mood for sleeping. All the time came that undercurrent of throbbing drums. I could hear, too, the voices of the people right out there beyond the thorn-bush. The sound of drums rose and fell with the night wind. The only answer to irritation of this sort was

work. So I lighted my hurricane lantern and prepared to set out for the hospital. It was 1 a.m. Grasping a knobbed stick in case snakes should happen to be on the path, I walked those two hundreds yards to the hospital. I was closing the gate after me when there came the sound of a crash and an outburst of angry voices, and then suddenly the darkness of the ward was lighted up with a glare. There came a chorus of screams. I pushed my way through the door and there was one of the palm mats on the floor blazing like a giant torch and sending up clouds of black smoke. Grabbing the end of the mat that had not yet caught fire, I dragged it through the ward. It lit up the ward sharply and I saw several little black faces peering in terror over the top of the blankets. I made no attempt to put it out. It was ruined anyhow, and even brand new mats were only fourpence each. When the flames had burnt down to a dull glow I picked up my lantern and made investigations about the cause of all the trouble. I found that it had started when an old African woman had come into the children's ward in the early hours of the morning. How she had got in remained a mystery. Seeing her granddaughter lying in bed (her temperature was well over the 103-mark and she was drastically ill with pneumonia) the old woman picked her up, placed her on the floor and calmly went to sleep in the child's bed. The fact that the little girl was unconscious meant that there was no outcry. The night nurse had been in another ward giving treatment to the eye patients, and when she came back to see that all was well she had discovered the grandmother and was filled with righteous indignation.

She had proceeded to drag the old African woman out of the bed. In self-defence the grandmother had grabbed hold of the kerosene box that served as a locker beside the bed. Over had gone the lantern, breaking and spilling kerosene all over the mat, hence the fire and all the other troubles. Gently but firmly I ejected the old woman and showed her where she could sleep. I even lent her a mat and a blanket. Then I went the rounds of the

ward. Some of the children were terrified, others of them had slept right through the whole thing. Soon all was quiet again. In one corner of the ward was Mazengo, the small boy whom Mubofu had brought in. He was drastically ill. I decided to take a risk and give him injections into a vein. It seemed the only way to save his life.

I felt it wiser to be close at hand just in case of any reaction, so quietly closing the door I went over to my office. Now I found it was not difficult to write. The words just flowed off the end of my pen, and page after page was added to a big brown envelope which had written on it "Jungle Doctor's Enemies." Closing my pad, I yawned. The dilapidated ward alarm clock showed 3 a.m. Bed was a necessity, but as I picked up the hurricane lantern the night nurse burst in. "Bwana, three men came into the ward, grabbed Mazengo and disappeared. I could do nothing," she gasped.

I turned up the lantern and made a thorough search of the hospital grounds, but all I found was a gaping hole in the fence. I stood listening and there came a crescendo of drums over the plains.

It was as though Chibaya was celebrating a victory.

Next day was ominously quiet, with the stillness that seems to come before storms.

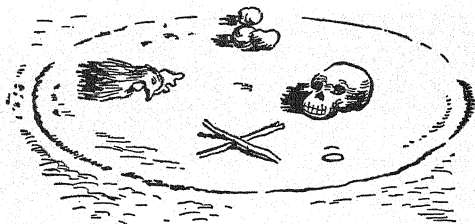
For the first time in a fortnight I had not heard Mubofu's "*Hodi*" in the hour before dawn, and what was just as remarkable, I did not notice any of those weebegone little processions of sick people coming to hospital that morning as I looked out over the plains.



They had been so much in evidence during the last hectic fortnight.

At the hospital there was not the usual bustle and action. Daudi came across to me. "Bwana," said he, "it has happened. Come and see."

Outside the main gates of the hospital, in the dust of



the path was drawn a circle, and in that circle the head of a rooster, two crossed sticks, the dried fruit of a baobab tree and the skull of a monkey.

I looked at all this in amazement. "What's it mean, Daudi?"

"It means, Bwana, that the witch-doctor from Mubofu's village has cast a spell on the hospital. And a spell has been cast all right. The people are terrified. Already, Bwana, more than twenty patients have run away and many children have been carried away in the arms of their relations. Behold, is there not a great hole made in the wires of the fence? To-day will be very quiet and difficult, for people's hearts are full of fear. And, Bwana, they fear spells more than they fear disease."

We spent a most difficult time in the ward explaining to the various relations that they had nothing to fear from the spell. They looked at me as though I was a small child who could not be expected to understand danger when he saw it. Only two or three people came

for medicine instead of the usual hundred, and reports came in that the whole countryside was resounding with a whispering campaign. "Go to that hospital and you will die" was the grim slogan passed from mouth to mouth.

I called the staff together; the dispensers in their aprons squatted on the floor while the white-capped nurses sat on a form. They were all attention. "Listen: once there were three men who lived in a country where the king did not follow the ways of God. Being very full of pride he had a great golden image made. He commanded that everyone in the whole of his kingdom was to bow down before that golden image when much music was made on various instruments. The three young men spoke one to another and they decided that they would not bow down to the king's golden image, even though he had said that anyone who did not worship it would be thrown into a huge fire. The great day came. The huge fire was made, the music sounded and everybody in the whole kingdom bowed down to the golden image except the three young men. Behold, the king was very full of great wrath indeed. He ordered the three young men to be brought before him and he said, 'Bow down to that image,' and they said, 'No, our God is the only true God.' 'If you don't bow down to that image,' said the king, 'I will have you thrown into the great fire.'

"'O King,' they said, 'we cannot worship your image, and we would like you to know clearly and definitely that our God whom we serve, is able to deliver us, and He will deliver us, but even if he does not, know clearly, O king, we will not bow down to the golden image.'

"Behold, the king was furious. He ordered the fire to be made seven times hotter. He ordered the young men to be bound hand and foot and then they were thrown into that great fire. All the people saw them being thrown in and they said, 'Behold, that is the end of those who do not obey the king.'

"But then they looked, and right in the heart of that

fire they saw, not three men, but four. The king himself looked and said, 'Behold, the fourth looks like the Son of God.' So he called in a loud voice and the three young men came out from the fire and there wasn't even a scorch on them, although the men that threw them in were very badly burned.

"Behold, to-day in our hospital here we are meeting a test. Do we believe in God and serve Him like the three young men? Do we believe that our God whom we serve is able to deliver us and that He will deliver us?"

Daudi nodded. "Bwana, I believe that."

"And I," said old Sechelela. "I believe it with all my heart."

"When you fight," I said, "it is a good thing to have weapons. Do you remember when Jesus was tempted by the devil that He beat him every time with God's Book? Listen: here is a verse that we will use in this fight. It is in the Book of Isaiah and it says, 'Fear thou not for I am with thee, be not dismayed, for I am thy God. I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness.' Shall we go forward to the attack, my friends?"

There was a nodding of heads. I went to the door of the hospital and there in front of me was the round circle with the witch-doctor's charms in it. With my foot I kicked these into the dust, trampled them under my feet, and rubbed out the circle. The staff stood by and watched with awe. I think they expected me to be struck dead. As they stood there I started the hymn "Fight the good fight with all thy might, Christ is thy strength and Christ thy right."

They took it up lustily.

"Come," I said, "we're not going to defend our hospital, we're going to attack. Behold, I have many ideas to put before you. Be on the veranda when you hear the great drum beat."

CHAPTER XIII

MANŒUVRING

I CALLED Daudi aside. "Send someone to find Ndogowe—the donkey man—and see if you can find out what has happened to Mubofu. I think it's more than strange that these charms should be put here and that he does not turn up."

Daudi nodded and hurried away. I walked over to the Girls' Boarding School. There were a number of cases of measles, all of whom were well on the mend, but it seemed more than likely that there would be a new outbreak when some thirty girls came back to school after holidays in far-away villages. All the schoolgirls were called together.

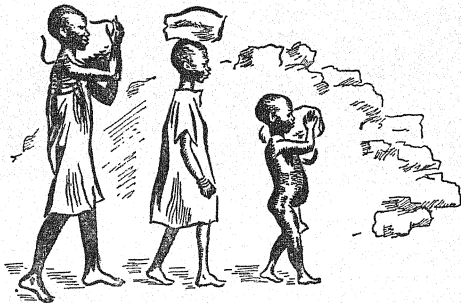
"Listen," I said, "I want your help. We are fighting a battle at the hospital, and I want to do many things. There is not room in our hospital for all the people who are sick, and I want to have a special ward for those who get what we call infectious diseases like measles and chicken-pox, and the cough that whoops. Behold, I already have the cement for the floor and Sulimani, the Indian, has promised to bring me much dry grass for thatching the roof, so you see I have the roof and the floor, but I need the material to keep them apart."

The African girls laughed. "Bwana, we'll help you to make some bricks," they said.

"Will bricks dry in the wet season?" I asked. "Also, they take time to make. We have not the opportunity of baking. What I want is stones, not bricks. Would each of you carry a stone a day for me from the river-bed so that we may build a ward to help the sick children?"

There were nods from all directions. "Yes, Bwana, indeed we will help, and we will carry more than one stone a day."

And in less than an hour a long line of children, looking like a queue on the move was on its way from the river, small boys carrying stones on their shoulders as is the habit of the men in Tanganyika and the girls carrying



considerably larger stones on their heads, as is the habit of the women. In a surprisingly short time a great pile of stone was in the hospital grounds. A message was sent to our Indian friend and he undertook the next day to send over the grass. We spent the afternoon busily with plans, and before sunset the first stones had been laid on a solid rock foundation. Soon I saw little groups of people making their way furtively to the hospital. Quite a number of those who had run away in the morning came back in the evening. Like wind through a wheat field the news had spread over the countryside that I had spurned the spell and nothing had happened to me. More than that we had set to work to build in the hospital to make space for more patients.



As darkness closed in I saw coming towards me out of the shadows an African woman. "Bwana," she said, "I come from Chibaya. As I was coming home this afternoon from visiting a relative I saw some men of our village beating Mubofu with sticks. They beat him, Bwana, till he fell on the ground and then they beat him on the head and on the body. Bwana, I think he's dead for I saw them throw him into an *ikolongo* (a creek) in the place where *mbisi* (the hyena) lives with his many relatives."

Calling for Daudi and Samson I raced up to the old car with a lantern in my hand. We mustered a search party of hospital folk and everybody that could possibly squeeze into old "Sukuma" was crammed aboard. As if sensing the urgency of the situation the old car started first time, and I drove hectically down the rough road towards Chikoti's village. Always in my mind was the picture of three slinking hyenas, afraid to attack a man when he was up and well, but they would be only too willing to attack horribly an unconscious small boy. I pulled the car up with a jerk at the place where only a few nights before, it seemed, the little lad had led us home through the darkness. Grabbing my lantern I ran down the creek, but others were before me. There was no sign of Mubofu, and then suddenly far off to the left, in a thick tangle of undergrowth and cactus came a shout from Samson. Rushing to the spot I found two of the hospital dispensers standing over the body of my little blind friend. He was lying huddled on the ground in a most unnatural position. I put my hand on his bare chest. His heart was beating. But even in the vague light of the hurricane lantern it was obvious that his skull was fractured and that one of his arms at least was broken. With infinite care we carried him back to the car making him comfortable on a mattress.

I drove back along the rough road as gently as possible. "Daudi," I said, "this is the work of a devil."

"Truly," said Daudi, "does not the devil enter into men after they have turned their back on God?"

We drove on in silence and then Daudi said, "Bwana, behold, they will not stop the fight. They will do worse things; we must watch every move."

It was nearly midnight when we carried Mubofu out of the operating theatre. His life was certainly in the balance. The excitement and the strain of the day left me utterly weary. I knelt down beside that operating table and prayed for strength and for wisdom. I reminded Almighty God of what was written in the Bible: "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings as eagles. They shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint."

And then I prayed for the life of the blind boy who had gone as near to martyrdom as I had seen anyone go.

The light was very dim in the theatre. As I got up from my knees I looked towards the window. Pressed



against it was a face that I certainly didn't recognize. I flung the door open and rushed out and saw a dark figure, running all out, disappearing towards the open hospital gate through which the stretcher party had gone only a few moments ago. It was obvious that

Chikoti's spies were about and I felt that violence was in the air. The door of the men's ward was locked that night, and Samson, armed with a heavy stick, lay across the doorway.

Early the next morning my enthusiastic group of small friends brought stones for the building of the new infectious ward and scores of people came in once again for medicine. Slowly, many of the empty beds filled up again, and then towards sundown Sulimani arrived with a lorry-load of bundles of grass; grass six feet long which, cunningly placed, would be the roof of that new ward.

There seemed an easing of tension in the hospital generally. I heard laughter again, and groups of people came to look at the heap of stone and grass. The lame carpenter had been busily cutting beams and rafters in his workshop. African masons had been facing the stone, while others built, and my little friend, Mubofu, was lying in bed conscious. There was still half an hour of daylight when Samson came to me.

"Bwana," he said, "we have made a bad mistake. If we leave the grass there on the ground the white ants will come and make short work of it. Would it not be a good idea if, while there are people about, each carries a bundle and places it on the top of the roof of the men's ward? Behold, then, it will keep the place cool and will make it easier for Mubofu to get better."

It seemed a splendid idea, and soon most of the grass—there must have been a couple of tons of it—was carried and carefully stacked in order on the roof of the men's ward. I had urged Samson to see that the job was done as silently as possible. And so quietly was it done that many of the patients in the ward were not aware that anything had happened to the corrugated iron over their head—actually there was a great stack of grass piled on it. I watched the first stars twinkle out. It seemed to me that there was a swing of the battle in our direction. I said as much to Daudi as he came across to talk to me.

"*Kah*," said Daudi, "Bwana, it may be so, but behold, Chikoti is a man full of cunning and I feel that he will

attack us again. I think it would be wise for us to have a watchman at the hospital for the next few weeks. Perhaps they would even come and try and take Mubofu from the ward."

"Now, that's a splendid idea, Daudi, about the watchman. *Heeh*, we'll get hold of Maswaga—he'd roar like a bull or a lion. Would he not frighten anybody with the noise he makes? And yet he could creep as silently as a leopard, and run like a deer."

"Right, Bwana, I will call him. He lives over there." Daudi pointed with his chin in the direction of the rising moon. We could see silhouetted the beginnings of the building of our infectious diseases ward. I looked at it for a moment—it seemed to me that the moonlight was playing tricks.

"Daudi," I said, "surely that building is much higher than it was at sundown."

"*Kah*," said Daudi, "that is due to the laziness of our hospital water-carriers. Behold, did they not carry the grass and hide it round the corner of the yard? But, Samson came round there and fell over it. There was much of it. Behold, it would not be safe to put it on the top of the ward because we cannot see now, so we carried it and put it on top of all the stonework."

"Right," I said, "well, it can't come to much damage there."

Daudi agreed with me. It all went to show how little either of us was prepared for what was to happen that night.

A voice came out of the darkness. "Bwana, come quickly, come to the men's ward."

"Right," I replied, "I'll come. I'm coming now."

I ran. "What is it?" I gasped as I came to the door.

"Bwana, it's Mubofu, he has become strange all of a sudden."

CHAPTER XIV

SECRET WEAPON

THE small boy was lying in bed with a peculiar fixed look on his face. It appeared as though he was trying to look for something with his sightless eyes. All the time he kept mumbling the word Mazengo, Mazengo, Mazengo. Daudi was breathing hard beside me.

"Daudi, who's Mazengo?"

"Bwana, he was the small boy Mubofu brought in days ago, the one who had pneumonia. Remember?"

"Yes," I replied, "the one whom they kidnapped the other night?"

I put my hand on Mubofu's arm. "What's up, old chap?"

Consciousness seemed to come back for a moment. "Bwana," he said, catching me, "perhaps they have taken Mazengo from hospital. Is he not in the Chief's place—in the place where they store the corn. Bwana, help him."

Then once again he lapsed into delirium. All the time he kept muttering Mazengo, Mazengo, Mazengo. Suddenly he sat up and screamed. A scream that made me shudder. There was terror in the sound.

"Quietly, old man," I said, "quietly. All is well."

"Bwana," he said, "go to Mazengo, go to Mazengo. You will, Bwana?"

"Yes, old chap," I said, "I'll go. You lie down."

I whispered to Daudi and he came back a moment later with a glass of very powerful sedative. "Mubofu, drink this, old chap."

"Bwana, truly, you'll go to Mazengo? You'll go now?"

"Yes, old chap, but just you drink this like a good man."

He drank every drop and then sank back in bed.

Daudi said to me, "Bwana, you're not going at this time to the place where all the damage comes from. Don't do it, Bwana, it's too dangerous."

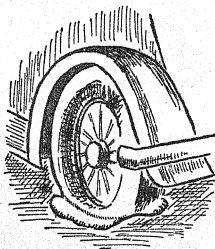
"I don't see that I've got any choice, Daudi. I'm not required at the hospital, and it may make all the difference in Mubofu's recovery. At least I can try."

"Well, Bwana, take your *bhuti* (rifle) with you."

"Daudi, to take any weapon would be to invite a fight. I shall go by myself and without any weapon except these . . ." and I showed him a couple of bottles—one with grey powder and a larger one with a glass stopper.

I went to get into "Sukuma" to drive to this village, but I found the poor old car very sick indeed. One of her tyres had been deeply slashed with a sharp knife.

Chikoti's spies had been very much at work. There was nothing for it but to go by bicycle, so with an electric torch to light my way over a very hazardous road I pedalled as best I could over the rough track. All the time I had the sensation of being followed, and I knew this was not imagination when a flock of sleepy birds noisily rose out of a great kikuyu tree. I pedalled harder than ever and suddenly stopped, pulling the bicycle beside me into the shade of a baobab tree beside the track.



A minute later two Africans, naked but for loin cloths, and each carrying a spear, ran past me, breathing hard. The track here was very narrow. I grinned to myself

and silently mounted the bicycle and pedalled after them in the darkness. It was very risky riding, but before long Chikoti's village came into view, and I could see well in front of me silhouetted against the light of the camp-fires the two men who were supposed to be following me. Pedalling faster I suddenly shone my torch on their shining backs.

"*Kumbe*," I said, "behold, there are more than one of us travelling on the road to-night."

They grinned sheepishly. "Yes, Bwana."

"It is fitting," I said, "that you should bear news of my coming. Go now to the Chief, Chikoti, and tell him that the Bwana is here and wishes to have words with him."

I wheeled the bicycle to a camp-fire in the centre of the village, and sat down on a three-legged stool which was brought to me by one of the women. I recognized her as one of those who had been coming secretly to get medicine at the hospital. A silence descended on the whole village punctuated only by the stamp of cattle in the cow-yard. Eerily came the wailing note of a night bird—an owl flew low over the fire, and the people shrank back.

"Behold," they said, "*ituwi* (the owl). Is it not a bird of black magic?"

Quietly I removed the stopper from the big bottle. The pungent smell of ether spread all round the place. People sniffed.

"*Heeh*," they said, "what is that?"

At that moment Chikoti appeared on the scene. He appeared very affable indeed. "*Karibu* (come in), Bwana," said he, "why do you come to my village on a bicycle at this hour of night?"

"Behold," said I, "O Chief, I prefer to come on a bicycle these days when there is witchcraft about and when men run in the night silently."

The Chief looked uncomfortable. Again the owl flew overhead. "Behold," I said, "is not *ituwi* very much about to-night? Behold, does he not scent witchcraft in

the air? Have I not come to seek one who has been taken from the hospital? Behold, you should have great anger, for is he not your grandson, Mazengo? If he does not come back to hospital very quickly he will die, for his sickness is a great one and the medicines that he requires are very special medicines."

Chikoti nodded. "Bwana, it would be a very bad thing for anyone to take him from the hospital."

"Chief," I said, "it has been done, that is the reason why I have come to your village." I poured some of the ether from the bottle into the palm of my hand, took a glowing stick from the fire and ignited it. There was a flash of light and people started back. "*Yah*. Behold," I said, "that is not magic, that is wisdom, that is medicine that we use in the hospital. Has your witch-doctor a medicine like that?"

I sat back on my stool and waited for the effect of that sally.

"Bwana," said Chikoti, and there wasn't quite the same confidence in his tone, "Mazengo is not in my village."

"He's not in your village, eh? Well, where is he?"

"*Magu Gwegwe* (I don't know) that is your affair," replied Chikoti rudely.

"He was taken from our hospital by your men."

The African shrugged his shoulders. "You saw them, Bwana, and recognized them? *Kah!*" He spat and turned away.

"Wait," I said in a voice that sounded harsh. "I have evidence that you beat and tried to kill a blind boy."

"*Hee!*" snarled the Chief, "if the relations have anger because their own children are carried off what is that to me, and as for Mazengo, my grandson, I know nothing."

I sprang to my feet. "Chief, you lie, he is in this village, and I know he is here, and you yourself shall lead me to the place where he is."

The Chief got up shakily (he was not a little drunk) and motioned with his hand to a group of his men seated directly behind him. They sprang to their feet. Some



had spears, others had knobbed sticks. I backed away until the fire was between me and Chikoti's body-guard.

"*Yah*," I taunted, "you have proved your lie by your actions." As I spoke I took from my pocket the bottle containing the grey powder and poured its contents into my right hand. The Chief again motioned with his hand and the men moved towards me.

"Look," I yelled, pointing with my left hand into the centre of the fire. For a split second they stopped and gazed at the flames and in that second I threw a handful of grey powder into the heart of the fire, at the same time covering my eyes. There was a sudden sheet of white light as the magnesium powder fired and yells of amazement from Chikoti and his followers. I took my hand from my eyes which had been protected from the intense glare and I saw my would-be assailants falling over one another dazzled and blinded by the flash powder. I grabbed the flabbergasted Chikoti by the arm and in a minute he and I were the only two visible in the village.

"Take me to him," I ordered.

Without a word he went across to his own house. There, by the light of a crude kerosene lamp I saw Mazengo lying on a blanket. My fingers on his pulse told me that the Chief had unwittingly told the truth. I got to my feet.

"Chikoti, indeed Mazengo is no longer in your village. He has gone on the last long safari."

CHAPTER XV

FIRE!

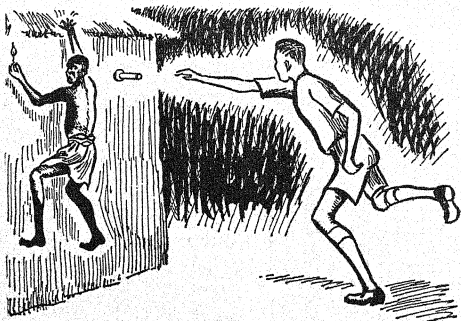
PICKING up my bicycle from under the shelter of a baobab tree, I mounted, and flashing on my torch, rode back to our hospital on the hill. My heart was very heavy indeed. A night bird dazzled by the light from my torch flew straight towards me. Swerving to avoid it, I saw something white seeming to beckon me from the thorn-bush at the side of the road. I got off the bike and went towards it. It was the pyjama coat that young Mazengo had worn in hospital, and it seemed that those taking him from the hospital, in their sheer spleen had pulled this from the small boy's back and thrown it on the roadside. I wheeled the bicycle over a particularly dangerous piece of road, mounted again and rode along a flat stretch between two river-beds. Suddenly from the village behind me a drum started to beat—a single drum with a rhythm that was entirely strange. In the darkness it seemed to carry some sinister message. What it was I had no idea, but it made me pedal the harder, and as I pedalled I thought that if they would do what they had done to young Mazengo, perhaps they still had plans to injure Mubofu, although surely they had done enough to him.

In my mind I went over again the various steps of the intricate operation that I had had to perform to deal with his fractured skull. Silhouetted on the hill I could see the hospital buildings—a hurricane lantern moving round from window to window, and I knew that the night nurse was on her job. At the far corner of the hospital

fence I could see another lantern moving, and I knew that my night watchman was very much awake and prepared for emergencies.

There was still half a mile to go, when suddenly, near the place where our new ward was being built, a flame leapt into life. In a minute it was a huge blaze—somebody had set light to the pile of grass that we had stored there for the roof of the new building. Pedalling frantically, I saw figures rushing from all directions, but I knew there was little hope of saving any of that grass. It seemed to me that the message of that drum was now clear. I forced the old bike along faster than she had ever gone before—I could see their next move, it would be to set fire to the grass on the roof of the hospital ward, that very ward where young Mubofu lay, fighting for his life. It could very well be that the excitement of a fire at this stage might be enough to tip the balance against him, and cause him to travel the same path as young Mazengo had travelled only a few hours before.

Near the hospital gate I jumped off my bike, still



holding the torch in my hand. Not twenty yards ahead of me I could see a dim figure clinging lizard-like to the wall of the hospital. Suddenly there was the splutter of a match being struck. I watched the tiny flame move towards the great pile of grass on the roof a few feet away. With a yell I rushed forward and threw my electric torch. It caught the dark figure squarely in the middle of the back. The match went out and there was a gasp and a crash as he fell. In a second he was on his feet and racing past me. I dived at him Rugby fashion, but all that I got was a dirty black cloth. Chikoti's man had rubbed the whole of his body with cow-fat, to make himself hard to catch in the event of a scuffle. I raced after him, but he was running like a hare. In the darkness he did not notice my bicycle. He must have trodden in the middle of a wheel, for next day I found that six of the spokes were broken. He went crashing into the corn. Daudi and several others had come over at top speed to see what was happening, but once again the marauder was on his feet. In the glare of the burning grass beside the new building we saw him, his long legs and arms throwing the queerest shadows in the red light. He dashed past the women's ward, past the theatre.

"*Tah*," said Samson. "Look, Bwana, look—now."

Suddenly, for no apparent reason, his legs soared into the air. He seemed to travel through the air lying down for a yard or two and then crashed to the ground, letting out a startled yell.

"*H-e-e-e*," said Daudi, bursting into a roar of laughter. "Bwana, the clothes line, it caught him under the chin—he didn't know it was there. *Tah*, now we've got him." But in a second he was on his feet again, running in a frenzy of fear. The last we saw of him was his scantily-clad figure disappearing through a collection of thorn-bush, so sharp and so long that it would make barbed-wire entanglements feel like velvet. For a moment we stopped in silent amazement and then laughed till it hurt to laugh any more.

Daudi wiped the tears from his eyes. "*Kah*, Bwana,

it could have been worse. Behold, he only burnt a bit of grass, all that we put on the roof of the ward is safe."

"Yes," I said, "but only just. I arrived in time to see him striking a match to set light to it, and then we'd have been in trouble. Probably the noise and the heat would have been enough to make Mubofu very, very ill again."

"Bwana," said Daudi, "I'm glad you've come back, he's been delirious, shouting at the top of his voice." I went into the ward, and Mubofu was certainly extremely ill.

"Where's the Bwana," he cried, "where's the Bwana, where's the Bwana, where's Mazengo, what have they done to him?" And then he lifted up his arms as if to ward off blows.

I could see the bruises, the torn skin, that showed what had been done to him. I put my hand on his shoulder and spoke to him quietly. "Lie down, old chap, keep quiet, all's well, it's I, the Bwana Doctor."

"Yoh," he said, "Bwana, Bwana, what of Mazengo?"

I signalled to Daudi to bring me a syringe, and then rubbed the little boy's arm with a swab of cotton wool. "Only a prick, old chap," I said. "Quietly now."

I pushed the needle home and gave the injection.

"Koh," said he. For a few moments he was completely frenzied. He seemed to have the idea that once again Chikoti and his thugs were attacking him.

"Yes," he screamed, "it was I, it was I that took the children to the hospital—I who am blind wanted to take them where they could have their eyes saved." He pushed my hands off his shoulder and fell back exhausted on to the pillow. For a moment I thought his pulse had stopped, and then it came back very slowly. As I stood there watching him I thought of what he had gone through in those past few days. As a background to all his life was the hopeless blindness which had left him with those two pathetically empty sockets. He stared up at me from the whiteness of the bed. He must have been about fourteen, I guessed, and in those years he had known

suffering in a great number of forms. There had been hunger, loneliness, and the sense of being unwanted, and then there had suddenly come new purpose into his life, and a new object—life had a goal instead of being just one long, black journey, set about with hopelessness and pain. My thoughts were interrupted when I saw his lips moving. I bent down close to him. He was calmer now. The drug was working.

"Bwana, where is Mazengo—my friend, Mazengo?"

"I went to him, Mubofu, and I found him in the *kaya*" (the Chief's house).

"Is he, Bwana—is he——?" He put up both his hands to me as he tried to find words to get round the question. I took his hands.

"Mubofu, your friend Mazengo is resting." The words meant much more in Chigogo than they do to us, and the blind boy understood.

Suddenly his small body shook with sobs. I stayed there watching until the injection had taken full effect. Mubofu was asleep. Daudi was standing behind me—in a whisper he said:

"Bwana, it seems a dreadful thing that all this should happen to him after he has done so much to try and serve God."

I tiptoed out of the ward and stood talking to Daudi in the shade of the pomegranate tree that stood outside. I could see its wooden-looking fruit silhouetted in the starlight against the whiteness of the ward.

"Do you feel, Daudi," I said, at last being able to speak out loud, "that God should protect us from that sort of thing?"

"Yes, Bwana, I do."

"Sometimes He does, Daudi, but do you remember what Jesus said Himself? He warned those who would follow Him—He said, 'The foxes have holes, and the birds have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head.' Did He not warn His followers again that He was travelling a journey which ended up at a cross where He would be killed, and did He not say that

very same path would be trodden by some of His followers—did not that happen to Peter, and was not James killed by a sword? And Paul had a dreadful time—if you read in the Book you will see how he was beaten; five times he received thirty-nine strokes with a whip, once he was stoned, he was shipwrecked, he spent a day and night in the ocean, he was bitten by snakes, he was attacked by robbers, he was hungry, thirsty, and finished his life by being beheaded, and he did it all with joy, because he loved God. Right at the end did he not say, 'I have run a good race, I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith, hereafter there is reserved for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall award to me on that day, and not only to me, but to all who have loved the thought of His appearing.'"

"*E-e-e-e* . . ." said Daudi, "it is a hard road that we travel."

"It would be if we travelled it by ourselves, but does He not say, 'Lo, I am with you always'? And, Daudi, do you not understand that Mubofu has been treading this hard road that his Master trod, and the scars that he has are a small thing when we think of the scars that He has."

There was silence for a moment, and then the dispenser touched my arm.

"Bwana! Look! In the dispensary——" I could see nothing, but suddenly there was the crash of a falling bottle. For the second time that night a dark figure dashed past us through the hospital gate and out into the gloom. It was useless to give chase, so we went into the dispensary to see what damage had been done. A pungent smell of liniment met my nostrils as we opened the door. A lantern showed that a bottle had been upset.

"*Yoh*," said Daudi, "Bwana, that will never be used to rub into people's chests. Behold, all that I had on that table there was a bottle and a pot of ointment. Behold, it is gone!"

"What sort of ointment was it, Daudi?"

My African helper grinned all over his face. "*Yoh*, Bwana, I believe the man who stole that medicine came

to get medicine for the one who set fire to our grass, and scratched himself very badly in the thorns. Bwana, that ointment is the stuff you made from chillies—we use it for a very different purpose from soothing.”

From experience I knew that that capsicum ointment if it got into a cut produced the most acute pain.

“*H-e-e-e . . .*” said Daudi, “we will hear stories before long about your very strong witchcraft. Behold, this has been a night of very strange doings.”

CHAPTER XVI

CONFUSION

I WENT outside the ward to retrieve my torch which had come in so handy at a critical moment. I found that the glass had not been broken and that it would still work. Shining it round the place I saw my bicycle. Picking it up I found that caught in the spokes was an ear ornament, a thing about as big as a two-shilling piece consisting of beads strung on a giraffe's hair in a very ingenious fashion. It was a very neat piece of native workmanship—I had never seen one quite like it before. I determined next day to show it to Daudi and Sechelela. When I did so, there was great interest.

"Bwana," she said, "there are very few people who wear those. Behold, there is a man who lives near Chikoti's village, a man about whom there are many words, he is a man of fierce anger, his spear has been more than once stained with blood."

"Bwana," said Daudi, "if you ever meet anyone who has one of these in his ear, then you'll know who it is."

There was no more time at the hospital for amateur detection. It was one continuous round of injections to be given, chests to be listened to, medicines to be made, and a series of delicate eye operations to be performed. At first the children had been frightened even of the eye-drops, but this morning when I came into the ward with a little tray containing sundry bottles, bits of cotton wool, and a series of sterilized sharpened match-sticks I was greeted by cheerful shouts of, "*Mbukwa*, Bwana."

"*Mbukwa*," I said, "here I am, and Sechelela is with me, with three big lumps of sugar for the folk who keep their eyes open best."

"*Koh*, Bwana," said one small boy, "you will need fifteen lumps of sugar, for have we not all been practising?"

In the eyes of six of these children there were ulcers, partly from their measles and partly from the medicine that the witch-doctor had given. I went to each of these in turn, putting a drop of cocaine in their eyes to take away pain. Then I filled an eye dropper with a bright yellow solution from another bottle; once again a drop was put into each eye. The mother of one of the children was standing at the doorway intensely interested in what I was doing. I beckoned her. "Come," I said, "tell me what you see in your daughter's eye."

She looked at the eye, which did not appear unusual, unless one knew what could happen to eyes with this disease. The child, obviously keen to win one of the coveted lumps of sugar, opened her eye wide.

"*Toh*," said the mother, "behold, do I not see on the window of her eye"—(which was the picturesque way she had of describing the cornea)—"do I not see a patch of green, just like corn when it has come from the ground after the rain?"

"Truly," I said, "you have seen what there is there, does not this medicine show where there is *chilonda*?" (the ulcer.)

Taking one of the sharpened match-sticks, I dipped its point, and its point only, in pure carbolic. I bent over the child. "Keep your eyes still," I said, "still as can be." I had the ticklish task of touching every bit of that ulcer with the point of that match-stick, since the carbolic would deal with the situation splendidly. But I knew that if I pushed it too far, or did not go far enough (it was all the matter of a hundredth of an inch), there was all the risk of a blinded eye. There was not a flicker from that small girl, nor from any of the others there. I turned back the eyelids of some of the other children, a

most uncomfortable procedure, and painted the eyelids with an antiseptic solution.

"Behold," I said, "I cannot award prizes to anybody. Everybody was so good."

"Yoh, yoh," they said, "Bwana, nothing for anybody?"

"Wrong," I said. "Something for everybody."

"H-e-e-e . . ." they laughed. "Bwana, this is a thing of joy. When can we go out? When can we be out in the sun?"

"Four more days," I said, "four more days will that blanket be up there, four more days you must pretend it is night in the daytime, and then . . ."

"Yoh," they said, "and then, Bwana. . . ."

From there I went to where the building of the new ward was going on. It was progressing at a tremendous speed. Samson was working as foreman, and he was seeing that every one of the masons did everything that they should do. I turned to him. "Samson, in a week there will be great rejoicing in this hospital. First the walls will be up high enough for us to put on the roof, and also we will be able to send home nearly twenty children well and strong."

In the men's ward Mubofu was in a pitiable state. He lay there groaning, delirious. He seemed to sense that there were many children still to be brought from his village. It seemed that he was trying to get them, and yet was bound hand and foot, and then in his delirium his mind turned to that fateful night when the chief tried to put him out of the way by beating him almost to death. For days his life was in jeopardy. There was no improvement until one morning I came to see him after visiting the carpenters who were about to put up the rafters of the new ward. His temperature was down and his pulse was steadier.

In a weak voice he said, "Bwana, oh Bwana, my head, my head, the noise, the noise." I signalled to Daudi and he brought a medicine glass to me. I held it to Mubofu's lips. He drank it, and as he drank he said, "Bwana, don't you hear those drums, don't you hear them?"

I looked questioningly at Daudi, and he shook his head.

"No, Mubofu, I hear no drums. I can hear the hammers of the carpenters putting on the roof of our new ward, but no drums."

"They are there, they are Chikoti's drums. They're beating, they're telling me that I will die."

Daudi went outside, and came back before long. "Bwana," he whispered in my ear, "there are no drums, there are no drums anywhere."

"Lie quietly, Mubofu," I said, "as quietly as you can, sleep all you can; behold, the pains in your head will get better."

He absorbed a tremendous amount of medicine to take away pain, and yet it seemed to do no good. Twice more I had to operate. Each time it seemed that the danger was greater, yet each time he rallied. While the last operation was going on I had ordered Samson to have all the grass removed from the ward roof and taken down ready to thatch the new building. The whole hospital had been going round on tip-toes, since even the slightest noise seemed to upset the small boy intensely. Late that afternoon I saw him.

"Bwana," he said, "they are hammering, hammering, hammering, oh Bwana, can you not stop them, hammering and hammering?"

"They have finished hammering, old chap," I said, "they are only putting the grass on the roof. There is no noise."

At that moment a donkey brayed about half a mile from the hospital.

"Koh," he said, "Bwana, do you not hear that donkey? Does its noise not go right through my head like a nail?"

It was then that I realized that damage had been done to his brain by the cowardly attack of the chief.

Things were much less hectic at the hospital now. We had taken down the strips of canvas that turned the hospital veranda into a ward. The children who had been so sick were now very much on the mend, and things were almost back to normal. In my office I sat at my

desk working out the cost of the epidemic. We had treated over a thousand cases; of this number two hundred had come to hospital. There were more than seventy children who would have been blinded for life if it had not been for eye operations. Of those treated, six only had died, and the cost of the whole campaign, every penny of it, was just under fifty pounds. I knelt quietly beside my desk and thanked God for the opportunity of serving Him in this way. How often I had been told that one should not attempt missionary activities, that the African was happy enough as he was, that there was no call for us to interfere. As I knelt there I thanked God for young Mubofu, for what he had done in saving life and saving suffering, and at what cost. As I got up from my knees, I found the blind boy standing in the doorway, his hands over his ears.

"Bwana," he said, "can I go somewhere away from the ward where the noises are not so great?" "Bwana"—his voice shook—"it was no joy to hear but now when it is pain to hear"—he shook his head backwards and forwards. I put my arm around his shoulder and took him to the little hut outside the hospital grounds where we gave injections to those who suffered from leprosy.

"Come," I said, "sit down here, and see if it is quieter. Behold, the roof is cool, and here the noises will not be so great."

He sank down on to the stool that I had put for him.

"Bwana," said he, "it's quieter here, and I cannot hear the drums."

Speaking very softly, I told him of the thousand people



whom we had treated for measles, and I told him about the twenty-four who had come into the hospital through his efforts.

"But, Bwana," he said, "Mazengo died, my friend Mazengo."

"Truly," I said, "but twenty-three others are living, and they would not have lived if you had not been there."

For the first time for days I saw him smile.

"*Koh*, Bwana, I hadn't thought of that."

"And then, Mubofu, had not Mazengo heard the words of God? Had you not told him?"

"Truly, Bwana, I had told him, and did he not talk to Jesus with me? Is not that why I miss him so much? Was he my friend? Did he not understand me?"

"Mubofu, our life in this world will not be over-long. It may be many years, it may be days, but when we depart on our last great safari, behold, we shall see our Master, and we shall receive from Him a smile of welcome and from His mouth the words, 'well done.'"

"*E-e-e-e* . . ." said the blind boy, as he walked with me back to the ward, "Bwana, there are many pains in life, but behold, things spring from pain which are worth having."

"Truly, my friend," I said, "did not Jesus Himself say, 'Unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains what it is, a single grain, but that if it dies, it makes a rich yield.' Jesus went on to say that he who holds his life dear destroys it, and he who makes his life of no account shall keep it."

"*Toh*," said Mubofu, "I understand that, Bwana, yes, now I understand why."

CHAPTER XVII

SNAKE INTERLUDE

THE move out of the bustle of the hospital life seemed to have a good effect on the blind boy, although he complained very much of pains in his head. One evening I took him to the new ward. It was finished. The beds were being made by the African nurses.

"Yoh," said Mubofu, "is there anybody in the ward?"

"No," I said, "not yet, but it may be that there will be more measles cases in the school, behold, some of them have come back from holidays, and even now the germs may be breeding inside them and soon the disease may start."

"Koh," said Mubofu, "it is a bad thing, this measles." He felt his way round the room. He tested the walls, he felt the newly-concreted floor. "Koh, Bwana," he said, "it has a good smell."

"If it had not been for you," I said, "we would never have built this ward. Chikoti would never have put a spell outside the hospital, nor would we have ever had to fight against the Jungle Doctor's enemies. Behold, but for you this ward would not be. There would just be stones on the hillside, and grass in the swamp, and timber in the forest."

Each morning when the people in the ward woke up, Mubofu would wrap his blanket round him and go quietly down to the hut outside the hospital wall, and there he would stay quietly, resting and gradually picking up. He still objected strongly to any noise. His head still gave him a lot of trouble, but one of the most encouraging things was that he had developed quite a considerable appetite.

Things had become extremely busy again at the hospital because a fresh crop of measles had broken out amongst the schoolgirls. Our new ward was full, and some of them had been very sick indeed. I generally managed to find ten minutes or so in the middle of the day to go down to Mubofu's little hut, and have a chat with him and tell him the doings of the day. One midday I relieved the nurse of two enamel plates. On one was a pile of native porridge and on the other some cooked beans which they called "a relish." He bowed his head and thanked God before he started to eat, and then we had a chat.

"Mubofu," I said, "the sick ones are doing well in the new ward—your ward." He smiled.

"Although I don't think that you would like to be there because *huh*, do they chatter? There is nobody there now who is really badly sick, for once again we have been able to save people from suffering and pain and blindness. *Kumbe!* behold, ours is a work that brings real satisfaction right down to the bottom of your heart."

Mubofu nodded.

"Bwana," he said, "indeed, perhaps when I am better you may be able to find work for me to do at the hospital; perhaps I could sweep or clean things."

"We will talk of these things when your headaches are completely better."

"Bwana," said the blind boy, "these days I am feeling very much better. *Kah*, I have joys. My heart sings. To work with God is to have joy."

As I walked back to the hospital Mhutila, the water carrier and gardener, presented me with a collection of snakes' eggs that he had dug up.

I took one of these in my left hand, and gave my right to Mubofu. I led him along the path to the new ward which was almost full of schoolgirls convalescing from measles.

"Would you like to hear the story of this ward, Mubofu?" I asked.

"*Hee . . . Bwana,*" said he, "how I would like to hear it. Tell me all the little incidents as well."

"Behold," I replied, "many of the children set to work to help me. They walked to the river and carried back many stones. Behold, in a few days' time there were large piles, and in a fortnight, all that we required had been brought. *Hee . . .* and then there was a great deal of measuring of sand and cement, and cracking of stones, and then . . . the foundations had been put in."

We had reached the door of the ward and I noticed that Mubofu hung back. I put my arm round his shoulder and drew him into the ward. Turning to the girls I said, "Do you remember the day that the foundations were put in?"

"*H-m-m-m . . . Bwana,*" they replied, "we remember."

"Well, tell me, what are the foundations for?"

The reply came in a chorus. "If you haven't got foundations, Bwana, the building falls down."

"But why?"

"Because the rains come and wash away the earth at the bottom, and the winds come and blow the earth from the bottom, and the walls fall in and the roof falls down."

For a full minute there was complete silence while this sank in. Then I turned to them and said, "Tell me, are snakes poisonous?"

"Yes, Bwana," they replied, "very poisonous."

"Are little snakes as poisonous as big snakes?"

"*Hongo, Bwana,*" said Mubofu, "is it not the nature of snakes to be poisonous?"

"Listen to my story. Sin is like poison. It poisons your soul. Little sins are as dangerous as big sins. Behold, I will show you this in a way to-day that will make it hard for you to forget." The sick children's eyes nearly popped out of their heads when I took the snake's egg and placed it on a large stone which had been left over from the building, in the middle of the ward.

"Do you know what this is?" I asked.

"*H-e-e-e . . . Bwana,* a snake's egg."

"Oh . . . and can a snake's egg bite you?"



"No, Bwana, the snake is too little. He is still in the egg."

"But, Bwana," said Mubofu, "if he comes out of the egg, then he could bite you."

"Truly, so what should I do?"

"Why, break the egg, Bwana, and the snake will not grow, and nobody will be killed."

"Right," I said, and taking a piece of firewood I belted that egg heartily, sending a most unsavoury collection of rubbish spraying all over the ward. Heads disappeared under blankets like magic. The nurse in charge was very upset.

"*Koh*, Bwana, you've made a dreadful mess."

"Perhaps," I replied, "but do you think any of these folk here will ever forget?"

"*Koh*, Bwana," she laughed, "they'll never forget. You hit that egg as though you had hatred for all snakes—a bitter hatred."

"That's the picture. There is poison in a snake, and

sin is poison, and I hate sin because it kills your soul. So let us deal with sins while they are very little, or they will grow."

"Bwana," said Mubofu, "we can't deal with sin, only Jesus can do that."

"Right," I said, "and when Jesus has dealt with your sin, children, don't forget then, that it is all important to build on the right foundation."

Mubofu walked off happily to his "house of quietness" as he called it and I left him to go into the operating theatre.

Two hours later I saw Daudi coming out of the dispensary.

"Go and bring Mubofu back. It's time that we collected him; it's quite dark now."

"He generally comes back himself before now, Bwana."

A quarter of an hour later Daudi was at my door, breathless.

"Bwana," he said, "there is no sign of Mubofu. He is not in his hut—behold, we have searched all round near the hospital, there is no sign of him, but in the sand near the hut, are the footprints of a man, they are deep in the ground. It would seem that he had a burden on his back. Bwana, I think that Chikoti has struck again."

But search as we would, we could find no sign or trace anywhere of Mubofu. It was as though he had disappeared completely from the face of the earth. My thoughts kept going back to what I had seen in that dry river-bed, that huddled up little figure, beaten and left for the hyenas and jackals and the vultures. Throughout the night we had searchers going all over the country. We had C.M.S. teachers inquiring in the villages. Ndogowe, the donkey man, had no news to bring from Chikoti's village. The whole matter was a complete mystery.

When people came in from distant districts, always the question was asked, "Have you heard of a small blind boy called Mubofu? Behold, he has disappeared."

Always came the reply, "*Chikali*" (not as yet).

CHAPTER XVIII

BATTLE CLIMAX

ONE morning the veranda of our dispensary was crowded with people. All had come for medicine and treatment. I was listening to the chest of a small African girl with my stethoscope in what was the peak hour of work in our hospital. The crowd round the door wanted medicines, cough medicines, quinine, eyedrops, eardrops, nosedrops, they all seemed to be saying so in one breath. It wasn't that they were making so much noise, because they knew the first rule of the hospital, that when they were waiting outside for medicine they must be quiet; but one could hear the whispered undercurrent, and then suddenly came a voice through the window, a loud voice, which was very insistent, "Bwana, Bwana——"

There was a tall African dressed in the vogue of the place, red mud in his hair, his earlobes pierced so that you could easily put a tennis ball into them.

"Bwana," he said, "it's a case of a broken leg."

"Wait a minute," I said.

I wrote on a card the treatment the small girl should have. I saw her go across to the window where the medicines were given out and grimace as she drank from a medicine-glass.

"Call Daudi," I ordered.

My chief dispenser was busy examining blood slides for malaria, which is all too common in Tanganyika. Leaving his laboratory he came across to me.

"Daudi, there's a man here who says in his village there's a case with a broken leg, and, well, we can't expect

them to walk in. Would you carry on and see the outpatients here, who have ordinary illness? I'll look through them and see if there's anybody really sick and you can give out all the other medicines."

Daudi put on his apron and prepared to do the job. I looked through the sixty-odd people who were still waiting—there were three or four who were obviously suffering from acute malaria; I saw that they were appropriately dealt with. There was a small boy with a tremendous ulcer. I outlined to Daudi the treatment that he should have. Then at the very end was an old man who needed an operation. I arranged for him to be admitted.

Then picking up my topee and a bag that one of the African dispensers had packed I prepared to go to the broken-leg case. First of all I checked the contents of that bag. There were some sandwiches that had hastily been cut and a large thermos full of tea. There were also rolls of plaster of Paris, surgical instruments, a case containing my emergency injection kit, and some very ancient scissors and an old pair of secateurs I used for cutting plaster.

I turned to the man who was impatiently standing beside me.

"Tell me," I said, "where is the break?" I pointed first to my thigh.

"*N'go*," he said, "*n'go*, no, Bwana, not there. It is . . ." He pointed to a place mid-way between the knee and the ankle.

"Oh," I said, "now tell me, has the bone come through the skin?"

"*Hongo*," said Daudi, and looked at me smiling. "Bwana, you are asking him if it is a simple or a compound fracture."

"Yes," I said, "that is exactly what I am asking."

"*Kumbe*," said the man, "behold, the skin is in order."

"Good," I said, "well, we'll be right, Daudi, with this kit, but you'd better give me a rubber strip that I can use to put inside the plaster so that when we take it off we'll not cut anybody."

The strip of rubber was soon produced.

Just before I went Daudi took me aside and whispered, "Bwana, I think there is something queer about this. I think you will find that there is trouble."

"Kah," I said, "it's all right. Things are too busy at the hospital for you to come with me. I'll go with him now. All will be well."

With that I set out on the nine-mile walk over the hills. It was quicker to walk than to go by any other means.

My guide moved at a speed which I found difficult to keep up with. We passed over river-beds which were full of moist sand, and pools of muddy water; in these pools small children were playing, splashing around in them and having a glorious time for that short time in the year when water was available.

My guide was not a bit talkative. Strangely, he hardly uttered a word. This made me feel that there was something queer about the whole proceeding. Over to my left I could see a group of hills, granite boulders protruding from them in the most unusual way. At the base of those hills was a place where we had been urged over and over again to build a branch hospital. Somehow the project hadn't appealed to us—it would mean a tremendous amount of travel and using of time and material which we did not have available.

At long last the village came into view. It was merely a group of typical African mud huts.

We came to one of these kayas and I was ushered into a dark entrance where there was an open fire burning under somebody's dinner—*ugali* (native porridge)—being cooked in a clay pot. By this flickering light I saw, lying on a cow-skin, my patient. Now, I am fairly used to strange sights and peculiar smells, but I will admit that I was completely taken aback on this particular occasion. The leg obviously was broken, but it was not as I had been led to believe, a small child, it was a calf!

I turned round to him. "What," I said, "you bring me nine miles journey through the heat, you come to

the hospital and call me away from scores of sick people to mend the broken leg of a calf?"

"*Heh*," said my host, "if I had not told you that it was a broken leg you would not have come. If I had said it was a calf you would not have come."

"Truly," I said, "indeed, I would not have come. Is it my work to look after cattle?"

"Bwana," he said, "it's the child of a very valuable cow."

"*Hah*," I said, "what about all the sick people at the hospital?" He shrugged his shoulders.

Cows are an African's riches so I decided that I would help, it might be that I could get news of my lost friend. I took the calf's owner aside. "I will agree to help you, but only if you can tell me news of a blind boy who was ill at the hospital and who has disappeared. No news, no medicine for the cow's child."

A look of fear sprang into his eyes, and at the same moment I saw behind him, coming out of a hut, an African with a peculiar ear ornament in one ear only. I knew where I had seen the fellow to this ear ornament; it was at the hospital the night of the fire.

I couldn't help smiling as I noticed him limp. I wondered if the bicycle, the clothes line or the ointment had caused the damage.

The calf's owner looked at me furtively and said, "Bwana, there is a village beyond the hills, on the way here, just off the track. I hear there is a great sickness there; perhaps the child is there."

"You will show me the way, when I have finished here?"

The African nodded.

So, with the family sitting quite forcibly on the unfortunate calf, which was rather keen to use its three good legs, I managed to get the broken portion into alignment. I put on a plaster in approved fashion, much to the amazement of the crowd of people who arrived to watch the proceedings.

I was invited to stay for a meal of *ugali*, and I decided

to do so. My hands were being washed ceremoniously by my host pouring water over them, when I saw Daudi arriving, looking extremely hot. He greeted the people in the local language, then coming across to me, he said in English, "Bwana, I finished the work at the hospital, and I felt that perhaps there was danger in to-day's work, so I came to be with you."

"Thank you, my friend," I replied, "there is trouble here, and much of it; but first let us eat."

The people were most intrigued that I was able to eat their food in their own way. They watched with amazement as I took a handful of the dry native porridge, dipped it into a bowl of boiled beans, and ate with noisy approval.

"Yoh," said my host, "behold, is he not one of us? Does he not do as we do?"

When the meal was finished and I was acutely conscious of it lying heavily within me, I took the calf's owner aside.

"Tell me," I said, "what you promised to tell me."

He looked furtively this way and that, and then said, "Bwana, in the swamp, in the middle of the lake, there are three old houses. You must walk through much mud to reach the island on which they are hidden. Bwana, these houses are places where you should not go, for on this island is death, and none of my people will approach."

"Tell me," I said, "in which direction is the swamp?"

Again the man beside me looked furtively around, and then pointed hurriedly with his chin in a southerly direction. As he pointed I saw the man with one ear-ring come limping round the side of a thorn-bush thicket, and disappear into one of the local houses. But the thing I did notice was that his legs up to his knees were covered with thick, black mud. I had one last look at the calf. It appeared that the plaster had set splendidly. My host made me a farewell gift of a basket of eggs—there must have been two or three dozen of them, but when Daudi at a later stage put them in water to examine them, we found that only three were good. Bidding

them farewell, I walked off in a direction very much other than that where the swamp was to be found. When we were out of sight of the village I told Daudi of all that I had learnt, and we hurried down a side path in the direction of the swamp.

"*Kah*," said Daudi, "Bwana, this is the sort of place where they could hide Mubofu and no one would know anything about it."

"Behold," I said, "I think the man with the one earring is undoubtedly the one who set fire to the grass at the hospital. Behold, he had mud on his legs. Might it not be that they have Mubofu a prisoner here?"

"I fear he is more than a prisoner. Perhaps even——" Daudi stopped in the middle of a sentence and shook his head.

We pushed on in silence and suddenly a swamp opened out before us surrounded by weeds, so placed that it was almost impossible to find unless you happened to walk along a path that wound through a dense thorn-bush thicket. We were soon at the edge of a lake of mud.



Daudi prodded carefully with his stick before wading into it. Every step he tested. I took off my shoes and socks and followed him in. For perhaps a hundred yards we waded, and then suddenly Daudi's probing stick disappeared. Carefully we paddled on, avoiding the deep mud holes, and at last came to a place where the bottom was solid. We followed this ridge round the edge of an island that was hidden by tall reeds. Struggling up the bank we pushed our way through matted reeds and stagnant water. Daudi suddenly sprang back in alarm. I saw lying on the bank the skeleton of a man. Beside it, dried in the hard mud were innumerable hyena paw marks. Close by was the unsavoury sight of the rotting body of a vulture. Other birds of prey hovered overhead.

"*Kah*," said Daudi, "Bwana, this is an evil place! See those birds; they expect more death."

At that moment I saw the house. It was of ordinary native style, but it had been let fall into ruins; the mud walls were cracked and had fallen over in places. The roof sagged ominously. Standing in the doorway, I could see a figure lying on a cow-skin.

"*Hodi*," I said, "may I come in?"

From the corner came a voice that was harsh and husky, "Bwana!"

"Mubofu," I cried, "you!"

"Do not come near to me, Bwana," said the boy, struggling to sit up. "I have a great sickness. Keep away!"

My eyes were becoming used to the dim light, and I saw Mubofu lying there looking haggard, his weakness accentuating the tragedy of his face. But the thing that brought an exclamation from Daudi was the fact that Mubofu seemed covered from head to foot with small lumps. I struck a match, and in a moment the whole matter was clear. He had smallpox.

Quickly I bent down and felt his pulse.

"Bwana," said the African boy, "do not touch me—I have a disease which spreads like fire."

"I have no fear of it, Mubofu, none at all. Do you

remember the scars on my arms, did I not tell you of the calf that developed this disease?"

Weakly the small boy nodded his head.

"So it's that, Bwana, is it? Bwana, there was another man here who had the disease. Behold, when they found that he was here, then they brought me. He went out two days ago, Bwana, shouting strange words, and I have not seen him since."

My mind flashed to the human skeleton we had seen in the reeds.

Mubofu was pitifully weak. He rested back on my arm and in a voice little louder than a whisper said, "Bwana, you told me that in heaven I shall see His face."

"Yes, Mubofu, does it not say in God's own Book, 'They shall see His face, and His name shall be in their foreheads'?"

"Bwana, will He want to look at me, covered with these?" He ran his fingers over the pock-marks.

"That will all change, my friend," I said, "when you pass through the gates. Behold, there are no diseases in heaven, and the only scars that are there, Mubofu, are the scars in His hands and His feet, and His side."

"*Kah*, Bwana," said the small boy, "if I had had the scars on my arms like you, I would not have this disease; but Bwana, the scars that really matter to me are Jesus' scars."

"Mubofu," I said, "that is true. Does it not say in God's Book that 'the punishment of our sins is upon Him, and by His scars we are healed'?"

"*Hee . . .*" said Mubofu, trying to raise himself on one elbow, "Bwana, oh Bwana." He put his hand in mine, and then sank back on to the tattered cow-skin.

Through a crack in the mud wall a shaft of sunlight lighted up the small boy's face. The grim work of disease and of the witch-doctor was forgotten. There was a calmness and a peace on that small face, which told its own story. Quietly I stood up. Daudi came over—put his hand on my arm and in a hushed voice said, "Bwana, he is seeing now."